

Vorarlberg Magazine

A life of
one's own
**Vorarlberg locals
explain what
moves them**

A vast
horizon
**Min Weag: a hike
around the whole
of Vorarlberg**

Exciting
outings
**Listen to the mountains,
enjoy fine dining,
e-biking and more**

In Motion



SIMPLY MULTISPORT.

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Read the digital version of the magazine

The Vorarlberg Magazine is also available as an e-magazine, featuring videos, slide shows, 360-degree photos and interactive elements. All links and videos are available from:

 www.vorarlberg.travel/magazine

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A gentle breeze off Bregenz. Lake Constance is a lovely, varied territory for sailors. You can moor up in a pleasant harbour, tuck into fresh fish on a terrace right next to the shore, or anchor in a bay, take another dip in the water and enjoy an evening away from the hustle and bustle. Water sportspeople also need a feel for the vagaries of the wind and

In motion for the love of nature

Enjoy the lake, experience the mountains,
discover architecture, cut your own paths –
a journey through Vorarlberg's environments.

the water when they are out on the lake, including tack manoeuvres. This makes sailors and surfers into a symbol for the Vorarlberg attitude towards life – living life in harmony with nature, preserving good traditions, yet receptive to and themselves shaping a change of course to enable a sustainable future.

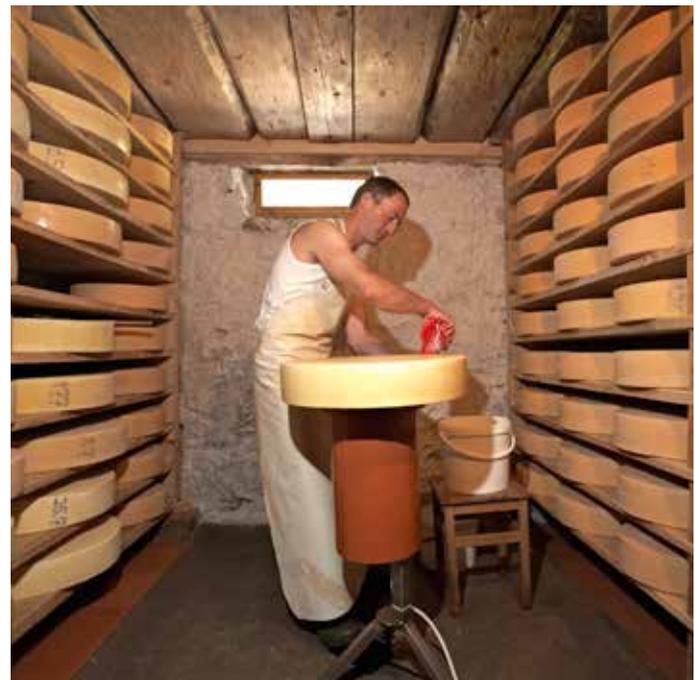


Life's journeys: the Walsers, who came here over 700 years ago, still manage to preserve and practice their culture today – naturally, this is particularly true on feast days, such as the mother and daughter depicted here on Corpus Christi.

Summer on the alp: these massive wheels of cheese are still made by hand. The milk used to produce them comes from cows who only eat herbs from the mountain pastures throughout the summer. Entire families and their animals move up to the alp for the summer months – and back down to the village in the autumn.



Looking towards the future –
the bathing house in Lochau is made entirely out of silver fir and belongs to the Seehotel on the Kaiserstrand

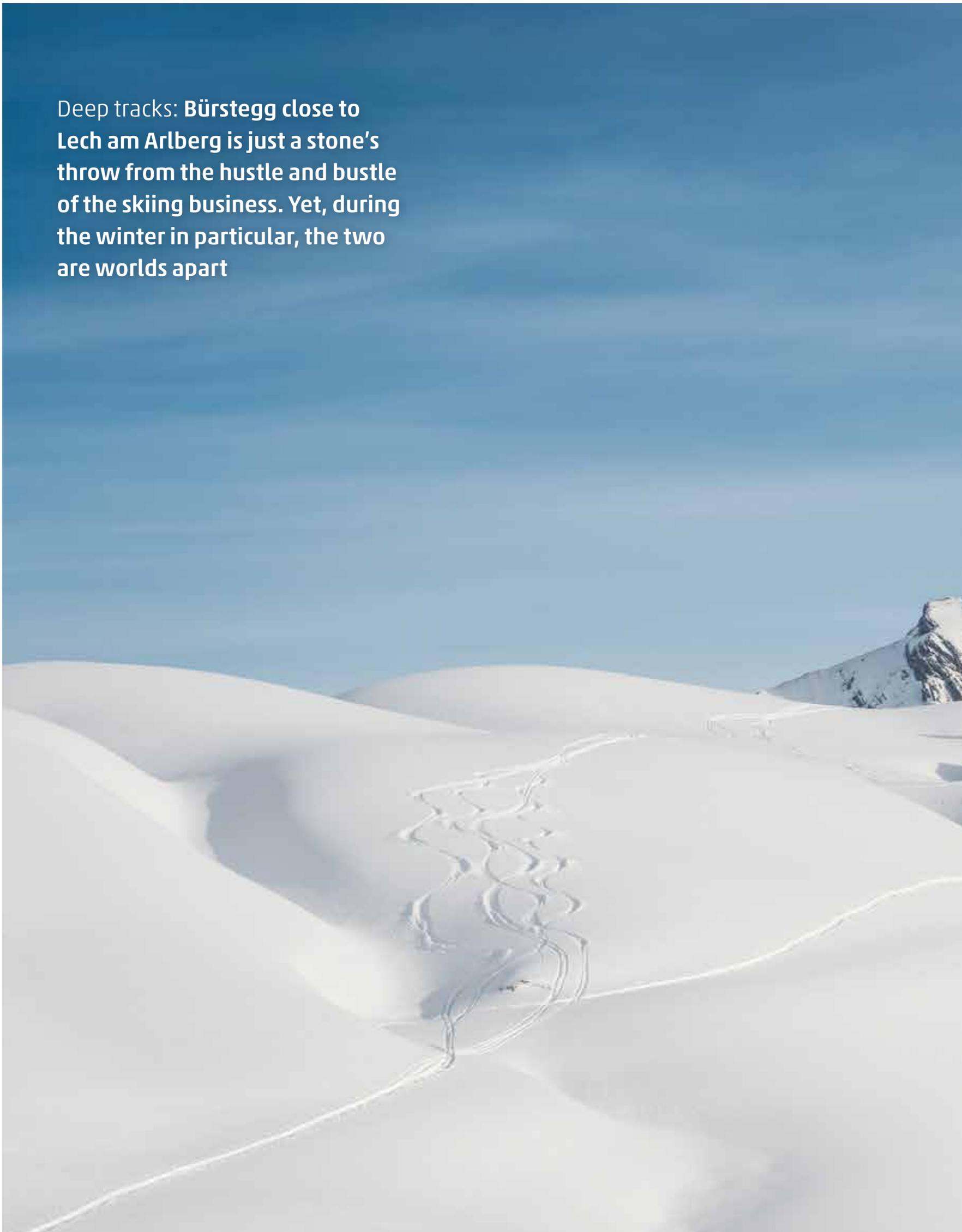




Favourite days on the Gsohl alp:
**from the early summer, cyclists
and hikers stop off for refreshments
at the rustic inn**

The sun and the mist join forces to draw magical landscape pictures between the summer and the winter. The mood on the Gsohl alp in the Rhine Valley is cosy, yet at the same time mystical. As soon as snow starts to fall, it starts to get busy – a toboggan run extends as far as the valley. Despite its consistency, life in Vorarlberg keeps moving throughout the seasons.

Deep tracks: **Bürstegg** close to **Lech am Arlberg** is just a stone's throw from the hustle and bustle of the skiing business. Yet, during the winter in particular, the two are worlds apart





Doesn't matter though. You can sit around the fireplace or next to the tiled stove in the evening with other people, living out traditions, enjoying pleasant conversations and letting your thoughts forge ahead - to the next summer in the mountains, up on the alp, around Lake Constance.

Take it fast, take it slow



It's not only the mountains that attract in Vorarlberg. True professionals in the art of long-haul flights and great products also come from Austria's most westerly state. Read on to find out where the loveliest spots on Lake Constance are, why Gustav is the epitome of pleasure and how the local cows became wanderers. Welcome to a place where even brass-band music can sound exciting!





Flying wanderlust

Remember to pack your binoculars: the Rheindelta nature reserve in Vorarlberg is the largest wetlands around Lake Constance, and one of the most important breeding and resting grounds for birds. No fewer than 330 different species have already been spotted. Visitors to the nature reserve can see the well-travelled animals in the flesh as part of excursions held between March and late November. As a Natura-2000 site, the Rheindelta nature reserve has also been part of a European-wide protected site system for 20 years.



Cows on the hoof

Grazing cattle don't get bored in Vorarlberg – they are frequently on the move. The three-phase agricultural system of alpine transhumance has been practiced in Vorarlberg for centuries, and it has been a UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage asset since 2011. The three-phase system comprises the following: after the thaw, the cattle graze in the valleys, then they head up to the mountain pasture at medium altitude. The animals then spend the summer in the high alps. The variety of herbs to be found there is not only healthy – the herbs guarantee particularly aromatic milk and, hence, the basic ingredient for the lovely, tasty alpine cheese.

Read more about the summer on the alp on page 22.

Fish fresh from the lake

Some things have stayed the same on Lake Constance for ages – the fishermen still pull their nets in by hand, and the width of the mesh and closed seasons are precisely defined in order to maintain a fine ecological balance. There are 14 professional fishermen still working at Lake Constance. Naturally, this means that fresh fish is available practically all around Lake Constance, such as at Fränzle's Bistro in Fußsach, which serves up the flair of the harbour along with the tasty fish.



Classy cars, sharp bends

Meandering over more than 30 hairpin bends through the naturally beautiful mountains of the Silvretta, the Silvretta alpine road is one of the loveliest panoramic roads in the Alps, and goes from Partenen to the Biehlerhöhe. It is not only the views, the alpine peaks and the wooden architecture of the Montafon which delight motorcar fans – the Silvretta Classic Rally Montafon is held here every year. Cult motorcars from the 1920s and 1930s as well as other gems from the early days of the history of the motorcar compete in the vintage car race. Incidentally, for some years now it is not only veteran motorcars which take part – cars with alternative drives such as electric engines are also allowed in the race now in their function as representatives of the new age. 🌐 www.silvretta-bielerhoehe.at



Rise up!

The best thermal conditions for paragliding can be found in several regions, such as in the Bregenzerwald. Flight training schools offer tandem flights and courses for beginners. Fantastic views of the valley and completely new experiences of nature await the brave at heart.



To the top of Piz Buin

It was over 150 years ago, to be specific on 14 July 1865, that Josef Anton Specht and Johann Jakob Weilenmann along with the guides Jakob Pfitscher and Franz Pöll first reached the summit at 3,312 metres. Ever since then, it has been one of the most popular destinations for mountain climbers in the Silvretta region. The safest way to get to the top is as part of a guided tour.

Decathlon in Götzis

It was back in 1975 that an ambitious team comprising four friends of combined sporting events laid the foundation stone for the Hypomeeting in the Mösle stadium. Twenty decathletes with best performances in excess of 8,000 points. Twenty-nine heptathletes that have already beaten the 6,000-point mark: the event attracts the best all-round athletes from around the world every year. And it's a must for anyone who's anyone in the world of sport. Preparation and qualification for the Olympic Games are also held here. www.meeting-goetzis.at



Sample as you stroll

Culinary delights, design, fashion and a cool concept: the Gustav in Dornbirn is a salon for consumer goods far removed from the concept of a standard trade fair. Visitors don't have to rush about from stand to stand – they stroll through stylishly arranged rooms. The living room is home to designer furniture, and top-class chefs do their stuff in the kitchen. www.diegustav.com

»» Life is movement. ««

Aristotle



Transparent paths

Not only has Vorarlberg perfectly signposted its 6,000 kilometres of hiking paths – it has also numbered them to enable hikers to be located quickly in an emergency.

It doesn't get any better than this: there are 6,000 kilometres of hiking paths criss-crossing the state of Vorarlberg – and all bear standardised marking. Not only does the concept adopted by Vorarlberg make it easier for hikers – it also makes it safer for them: the middle of each signpost in Vorarlberg bears a four-digit number which,

in an emergency, enables precise identification of the location. Around 400 voluntary hiking path wardens are also on duty in Vorarlberg to ensure the quality of the network of hiking paths.

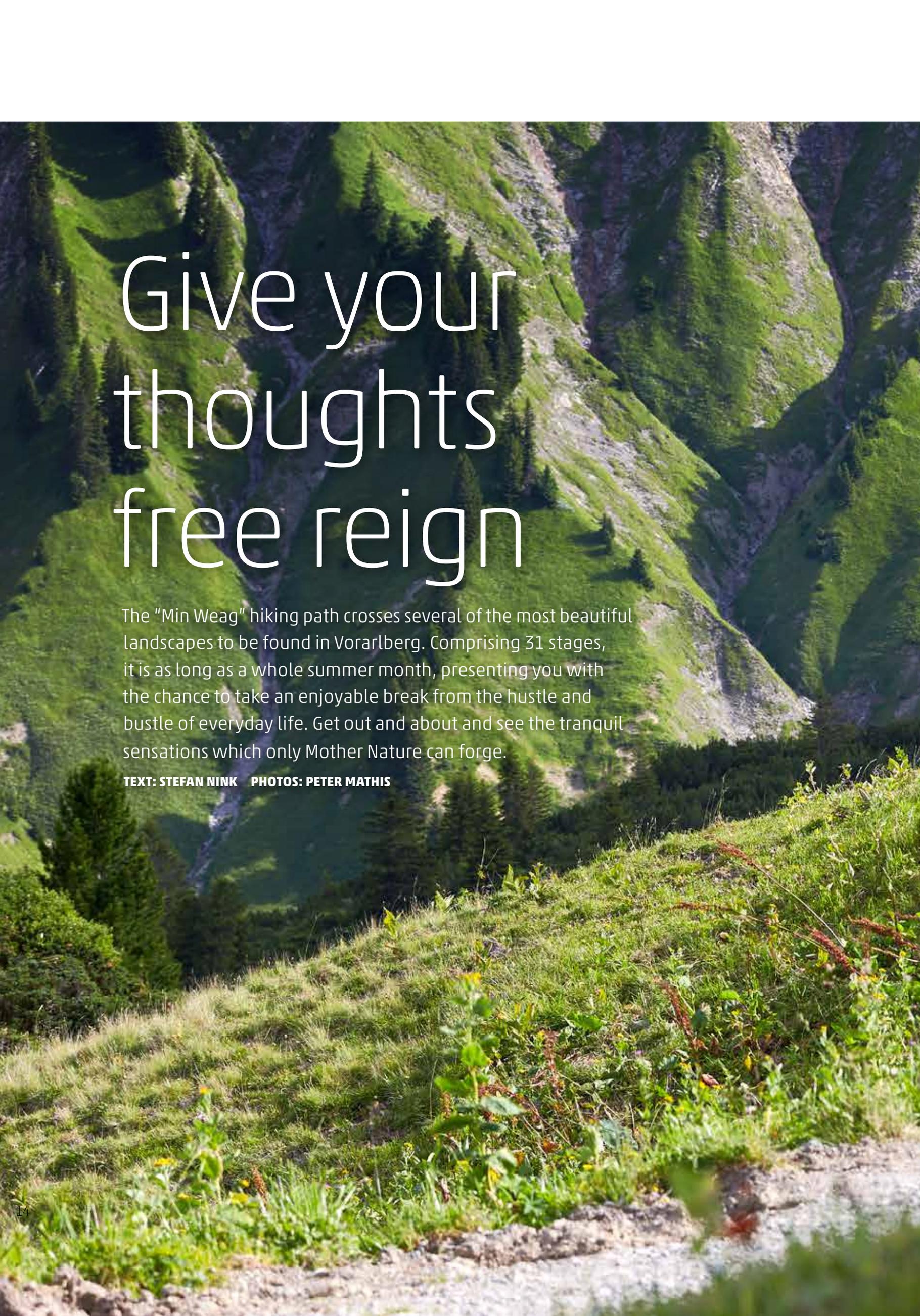
It is their responsibility to mark, safeguard and maintain the paths. Everything is up to date online too: all the stages covered by the Vorarlberg hiking path concept are entered in a digital hiking map which is available on the Internet and enables detailed planning.

 www.vorarlberg.travel/hiking



From Vorarlberg to the big wide world

Using expertise to hit the big time: Vorarlberg is home to many innovative products which are exported all over the world. Forty percent of the state's economic performance is ascribable to the manufacturing trades, frequently the products of family-run companies. Some of these family-run companies are global market leaders in their field, such as Alpla Werke Alwin Lehner, a company which produces plastic packaging materials. The cable cars and gondola lifts manufactured by the Doppelmayr company not only safely transport passengers in the Alps, but also in such far-flung places as New York and Singapore. Men and women around the world wear socks and hosiery from Wolford (photo).



Give your thoughts free reign

The "Min Weag" hiking path crosses several of the most beautiful landscapes to be found in Vorarlberg. Comprising 31 stages, it is as long as a whole summer month, presenting you with the chance to take an enjoyable break from the hustle and bustle of everyday life. Get out and about and see the tranquil sensations which only Mother Nature can forge.

TEXT: STEFAN NINK PHOTOS: PETER MATHIS



There are plenty examples of Vorarlberg's predilection for the modern version of wooden buildings out there to be admired – such as here on the Hochtannbergpass





It was a summer's evening, and we were watching football in the Berghotel Körbersee over a glass of Zweigelt, occasionally looking out of the window, where we still couldn't see anything. It had come over cloudy at some point during the afternoon: the clouds had snuck up on us, and now they were hovering just above the ground, occluding the world. They were lovely clouds – white as snow, like candy floss, weightless. They floated delicately above the lake as if they didn't dare get too close to the cold water. And then: it's a goal! The Italians cheered, and the goal was repeated in slow motion a few times. We ordered another round of Zweigelt and, when we looked out the window again, the clouds had gone. All of them. Not a trace of them in sight!

There are few things in the mountains more fascinating than a sudden change in the weather. When a picture-book panorama suddenly appears behind an impenetrable wall of fog – as if the clouds had been nothing but part of the scenery that someone has just pushed aside. We all went straight out to the lake, into the sun. We spun around in every direction, photographing the cows, skimming flat stones across the lake. Then we returned to the hotel to fetch our wine glasses. The signpost indicating the valley glistened as if it were coated with silver.

Up on the pass it was so quiet, you would have thought that someone had turned the sound off

“Min Weag”: this is the name of the hiking trail which criss-crosses Vorarlberg in 31 stages. Some of the stages are shorter and some of them are longer, some of them are gentle, then again some are tough going, flat, precipitous, steep – there's a bit of everything. The name of the hiking trail is in the local Vorarlberg dialect and, translated, means “My path”. It goes through valleys and tranquil mountain villages and towns, crosses Toscana-like rolling hills and spirals upwards to peaks, it meanders around mountain lakes and across rugged crests. In other words: it is as varied as the federal state of Vorarlberg itself. The best thing about it? You can join the trail anywhere you want, hike for one single day, or for two – or for as many as you want! And if you undertake one stage every day, then you are on the trail for precisely one summer month.

Feelings of home:
young women in
traditional dress
and little boys on
big alpenhorns. The
Walsers determinedly
keep their traditions
alive.



The Walsers: pioneers of alpine culture

Wilfulness, tenacity and frugality are all characteristics ascribed to the mountain people that are the Walsers – and there is no doubt that they needed these characteristics back then to turn the in part seriously barren vegetation of the Alps into fertile estates. The first Walsers left the Swiss canton of Valais around 700 years ago in search of a new home.

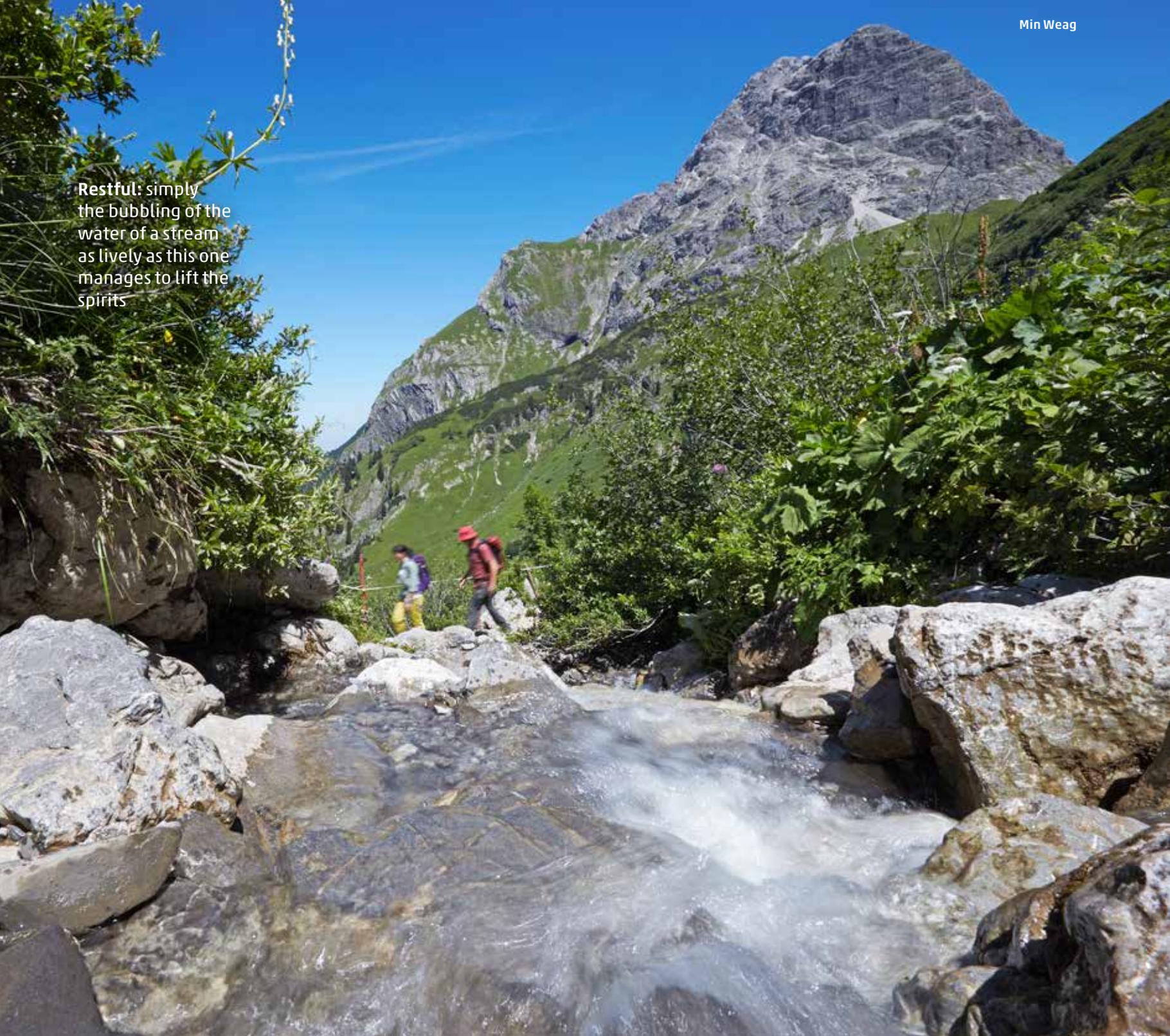
There are still 17 Walser communities in Vorarlberg where customs, traditional dress and dialect continue to be preserved and kept alive. Their history can be experienced in the Walser museum, on cultural trails and hiking paths as well as at the Walserherbst festival.

The Berghotel Körbersee is located between stages 9 and 10 of the “Min Weag” hiking trail. We set off early in the morning from the Kleinwalsertal, whose name givers – an Alemannic ethnic group – arrived here around 700 years ago on the search for a new home. The Walsers made use of the inhospitable valley by working with nature instead of against it, and the rulers of the time granted the new settlers exemption from tax in return. And so they decided to stay, and are still there. The culture and the language of the Walsers are still alive and kicking. Setting off from Mittelberg early in the morning, it is as if you are seeing the valley with the eyes of those medieval wanderers: how the tops of the fir trees are trapped by the morning mist. How the ibexes and chamois try to keep their footing on the precipices. How the silvery white waterfall ribbons crash down over the flank of the Bärenkopf.

You are accompanied by water on this stage – everywhere you go, it bangs, crashes and flows. In the Bärgrüntal you can see how rocks and tree trunks change its course, how the stream dams up, produces white foam, crashes against the nearest rock, foams again, dams up again, over and again, on and on. Many small waterfalls suspended from the mountain peaks like liquid threads ensure fresh supplies. All that together combines to create a roaring sound which permeates the valley right down to its nooks and crannies and, seemingly, the whole world.

Up on the pass it was so quiet, you would have thought that someone had turned the sound off. A bird chirped somewhere. Otherwise, peace reigned. You couldn't even hear the wind: it was busy high above us, stirring up the clouds, which then began accumulating behind us. There is frequently something magical about clouds when you are hiking. Sometimes you can see them coming towards you, thick, white, compact, and you wonder what will happen when they catch you up. Once they are there and you are surrounded by them, you no longer notice them. The view clouds over, your glasses mist up, and that is it really! A minute later, the cloud has continued on its way and once again looks impenetrable. Then, however, the next one comes along. And then the next one... And at some point you decide that the weather is bad. And you start to look forward to your hotel.

Restful: simply the bubbling of the water of a stream as lively as this one manages to lift the spirits



Restful: simply the bubbling of the water of a stream as lively as this one manages to lift the spirits

The next morning only gradually stole its way into the world of the summits and valleys – gingerly, carefully, as if it didn't dare. It was bright and glistening – the sun painted golden varnish on the mountain sides. We walked around Körbersee, and then we came to a standstill: right behind the water, we were met with one of those impressive mountain panoramas which never fails to take your breath away – just two or three steps earlier it seemed hard to imagine the dramatic extent to which the valley would be revealed. It felt like you could see the whole world this morning, as depicted on a “The loveliest mountains in the world” calendar. The meadows and their flowers looked as if somebody had upturned buckets upon bucketsful of confetti. And cows everywhere you looked, not a person in sight.

When it comes to the catchword of alpine hiking, it has been easy in recent years to talk yourself out of going, using excuses such as, “oh I am sure it will be full of weekend hikers and groups of day trippers”.

And then, on this early morning, you find yourself at a crossroads, looking at the cleanly graduated mountain ridges downwards to eternity, wondering what on earth you had been thinking the whole time. Busy? Overcrowded? It was high season, and yet there didn't seem to be a single soul about. Instead, a marmot whistled. The bees hummed lazily, and the sun cheekily peeped out between the peaks. In the cerebrum, some synapse or other fired off a signal to a neurotransmitter and, three milliseconds later, something silvery and tingling down in my stomach did a perfect somersault of happiness. What is it they always say in those Ludwig Ganghofer novels? “And he had a feeling of lightness.” Oh yes. That's it.



And he had
a feeling
of lightness.«

Ludwig Ganghofer

**This journey is the
destination:** weaving
your way along
wavy lines is highly
desirable here

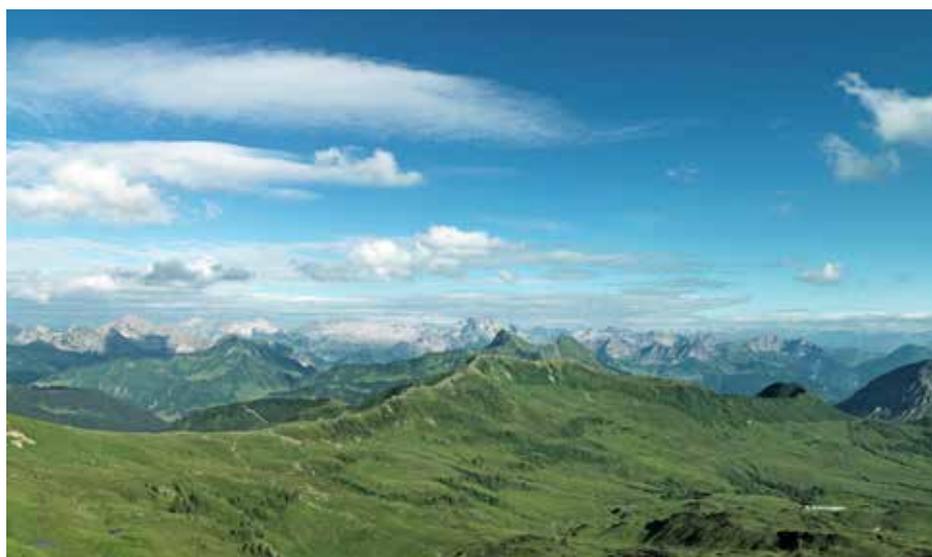
The path took us across grazing land, a lot of lush greenery between the grey of the mountain peaks

Naturally, this was also an effect of “Min Weag”. Stage 10 didn’t go to the right downwards to the panorama view – instead, it veered off to the left as if it was a tad afraid of the descent. The path then turned flat and smooth through undulating grazing land whose lush green was a lovely change from the greyness of the craggy peaks and ridges around us. Vorarlberg looked as if the Creator first of all put all the peaks in place and then took his time thinking about the best way to add some colour to such a scene. How come there are sceneries which look so perfect that they almost seem unnatural? Why is that? You feel as if you would like to ask the mountains, since you know that they have the answers to questions such as these. However, you are also aware that the mountains are known for keeping their lips sealed. They have been doing that for ages.

Later, several hours later, we sat on a bench and looked down towards Lech, the destination of stage 10. We sat there and watched a fat, obviously starving bumble-bee get stuck into the mountain flowers right next to us, going for one flower after another. We did nothing but sit there. Watching. As if we could have captured the passing of time by watching. As if we’d left this world for a moment.

Lech lay in the valley as if it had spent quite some time searching for its place, after long negotiations and in agreement with the mountains, between the green flanks of the Rüfikopf, Omeshorn and Kriegerhorn, in the lap of the slopes, protected, safe, well looked-after. Whereas you feel as if you have been floating this far, the last few kilometres really seem as if you are flying. Every now and again we looked back on the path already taken, just for the sake of it. Nothing but blue skies. What else would there be?

A great view: hiking moments that stay with you, such as here on the way to Sünser Spitze



“Min Weag”: coming full circle in 31 stages

The gentle hills of the Bregenzerwald, the mountain ridges of the Silvretta, the Rätikon, isolated mountain lakes and idyllic alps – Vorarlberg’s new hiking path takes you through the diverse landscapes and the cultural diversity of no fewer than six regions. The name of the hiking trail is in the local Vorarlberg dialect and, translated, means “My path”. It comprises 31 stages, each between 5 and 25 km long. The individual stages have different degrees of difficulty.

There is something for everyone on the hiking path – a two-hour walk, a hike through the whole of Vorarlberg or tours covering several days.

For further information:

www.vorarlberg.travel/min-weag





Then they were eight! The Riedmann family lives on the alp during the summer. The fifth child is visiting.

Presenting 11 Vorarlberg locals
whose life is in motion

The Riedmann family of alpine herdsmen

We're off then!

Every summer, the Riedmann family packs its bags, gathers together the kids, the cat and the dog, locks up their house and moves up to the Albona alp, close to Langen am Arlberg. And why? Because it's lovely up there

TEXT: HARALD BRAUN PHOTOS: DARKO TODOROVIC



Martin Riedmann can remember it as if it were yesterday, back in 2002, when spring was just around the corner. “We had just finished building our house, the garden was done, everything. That’s when other people go on holiday...” He shrugs his shoulders and his wife Veronika, known as Vroni, interrupts him, “Then he comes along and says he wants to go and work on the alp as a herdsman...” Her husband continues, “‘You are mad’ is what she said.”

Veronika Riedmann shakes her head, but looks more amused than annoyed. That’s just the way he is, her husband Martin. Brought up in a family of farmers, he frequently spent time in the mountains with his two brothers. His father was a master herdsman on the Lustenau alp. At first, Martin just spent the weekends “up there” at an altitude of 2,000 metres, but from the age of 12 he regularly spent the summers up there too. “It’s in his blood”, says his wife, and it is easy to believe her when she looks at Martin Riedmann. He is a strong chap, with large hands, a rugged complexion, a voice which, despite its warmth, growls and grumbles. And sometimes his dialect is really strong. Which is why, right at the start, Vroni offers to translate particularly incomprehensible passages. However, there is no need – Martin Riedmann makes sure that he is understood, in a plain yet emphatic manner.

“We just got on and did it”, he says, counting up the number of times. Thirteen already. “Always for the entire summer – 100 days, give or take a day or two.” Along with his wife and two daughters, Selina and Sabrina, he moves up to the Albona alp close to Langen am Arlberg and, with the aid of his dog Max, attends to 180 heads of cattle, 64 horses and 10 goats. Until recently, their oldest son Christoph used to accompany them. Now, however, he is doing an apprenticeship as an electrician and only joins them at the weekend. Lilly the cat, three dwarf rabbits and cousin Linda are also there. Out of conviction, simply because it’s lovely, as they confirm when asked about it. Boredom? What’s that? An alien concept, even for the kids.

What is it exactly that makes the Riedmanns want to go up the mountain year after year? “I could never imagine what it would be like”, replies Vroni Riedmann. Since her husband really wanted it, however, in 2002 she agreed – with a healthy dose of

»» They are back up again by six in the morning, up with the sun, to see to the cattle and the horses. «



scepticism – to accompany him up on the alp. Then she was convinced, she didn't need any more persuasion: "It's so lovely here", she says and explains why the summer months are the best in the year: "My most favourite reason for coming, though, is my family. We spend so much more time together, we sit together, talk and eat together. The kids are busy with the animals, build a dam, pick flowers, gather blueberries, spend time in the barn with the animals – together. At home everybody has their own room, and there's also the computer. But not here."

Martin Riedmann nods. That's true, all those things are right. However, there's another reason why he is attracted to the isolation of the alp over and over again. He loves working hard in harmony with Mother Nature. And he enjoys deciding for himself how to organise his day. "You are your own boss, as it were, you have to work hand-in-hand with Mother Nature!"

It is also thanks in no small part to their employers that the Riedmann family are able to do this. Martin Riedmann worked in the building trade for 20 years, is a crane driver and has an HGV licence. He has never been short of work, even when he was up on the alp for the summer. He has been making deliveries for a food company for the past couple of years. Veronika works too. Her boss is a huntsman. "Our employers have a good relationship with nature themselves, which means they totally understand where we are coming from", says Riedmann, and is grateful: "There aren't that many companies about that would go along with it when I say, 'I am off now for 100 days!'" Hunting and making a difference to the family's menu up on the alp isn't his bag – plus the fact he isn't allowed to go hunting. "I prefer to observe the chamois, the eagles and all the cattle rather than kill them."

The Riedmanns don't miss a thing – not the people in the valley, not the money that is harder to earn up here than would be the case for a



Watch out, Max!
The Riedmanns' dog actively helps out when the cows make a break for it

Even the kids enjoy spending the summer on the alp. Daughter Selina Riedmann is featured on the cover



Happy grazing: the cows spend most of the time outdoors on the steep mountain slopes – it is almost like fitness training for animals



Is it romantic to live in a mountain hut? Definitely! Yet everyone has to pitch in, otherwise life on the alp doesn't work out. The kids even help out in the kitchen

man of Martin's ilk living a different life. "Money is all well and good, but essentially it is out of conviction that you come up to the alp", he says. Vroni enjoys serving the hikers that stop off for a rest with the Riedmanns on their way to the Kaltenberg mountain hut, but she also likes it when peace reigns once again. A cold platter and a drink are available cheaply on the alp. "This gives us an additional income for surviving the summer", explains Veronika Riedmann. "But come the evening there is only us, and that's the best thing about it."

The whole clan is in bed by ten, and back up again by half five or six, up with the sun, to see to the cattle and the horses. Hard-going – yes, but it is healthy for both man and beast: "The higher up we get, the more tiring it is", says Martin Riedmann. You need to think of it as fitness training for the animals. And he has a saying at hand to support this claim: "The grass on the stone provides the meat on the bone!" Stress? Not a concept that they are familiar with up on the alp. You just need good legs. "When your feet start to hurt, then it's time to stop!" And can the Riedmann family foresee the day when they stay in the valley during the summer too? The herdsman scratches his shaggy beard, thinks and says, in all honesty, "Probably not for the next 100 years."



Evelyn Fink-Mennel

About cheering and yodelling

If you have ever wanted to rid yourself of a few prejudices about folk music, you would be well advised to meet Evelyn Fink-Mennel



Folk music is a continuous source of small-minded conservatism, right? Anyone who approaches the Angelika-Kauffmann-Haus, the 17th-century building in Schwarzenberg in the Bregenzerwald, with such prejudices, should be prepared for a surprise. Evelyn Fink-Mennel, born in Andelsbuch in Vorarlberg in 1972, world traveller, back in her homeland since 2010, is something akin to a searcher of the source of regional folk music. She is barefoot when she receives me, with a black coffee in hand. We engage in a bit of small talk, she finishes off a few e-mails after she has poured me a coffee and lets out a cheer – just like that. “Do you now understand the difference between cheering and yodelling?”, she asks casually. Well. I had asked what the difference is, but hadn’t expected the lady herself to start cheering straight away! I had entertained several expectations of a trained classical musician with a proclivity for the string quartet. I had not been prepared for this friendly yet odd-ball bundle of energy that can only be described as a cool mixture of Annette Humpe in her later years with the Berlin band Ideal and a smart university professor.

Thinking about the things that Evelyn Fink-Mennel has done in recent years alone would be enough to trigger an immediate nervous breakdown in people with an average level of energy. A radio programme on Austria’s public radio, ORF, for instance, in which she played what she considers true folk music. “Folk music isn’t that twee kitsch that it is frequently confused with”, she says. “Folk music is the medium with which entire countries, towns, indeed individual valleys once created their very own identity.” Tracking down as many traces of this folk music is the greatest passion of this musician from Vorarlberg. And making music, of course, which, “however, frequently draws the short straw”.

She established “Sägewerk”, the children’s orchestra, at the Bregenzerwald Music School. However, she is better known in Vorarlberg for being a member of the “Stemmeisen und Zündschnur” ensemble since 1991 (now known as “Zündschnur & Band”). “The group had an important influence on the local dialect movement”, Evelyn Fink-Mennel explains. She also runs the website www.migration.at – a project which presents portraits of musically active immigrants in Vorarlberg.

Ms Fink-Mennel lived and worked in Vienna for over 20 years, including a stint at the University of Music and Performing Arts. Now she’s back. Her husband, an architect, converted the barn of the old Kauffmann house into a refuge made from wood, glass and concrete. So why did she return to her homeland? “We didn’t want to deprive our children of the life here”, she answers. “It’s an idyll, after all.” And your home? “Yes, of course. Home too. Even though the term ‘home’ sometimes needs to be freed from dust, as it were.” Like folk music itself. With Evelyn, there is nothing to worry about in this respect. She can be found singing into a wooden milk sieve in the church, or teaching managers to cheer. Oh, she also has a part-time job researching folk music in the Lake Constance region at the Vorarlberg State Conservatory. Sounds a bit on the jejune side, but you can rest assured that when Evelyn is involved, things are anything but boring!

So much for old-fashioned: Evelyn Fink-Mennel loves folk music. Yet it sounds different from her

Roland Haas

The persistent call of the mountain

Roland Haas is a freelance artist, teacher and co-founder of the renowned Kunstforum Montafon. And by no means "on the side" – a trained ski instructor



The smile behind his rimless glasses is hearty, he has an aura of warmth, earthy open-mindedness and an intensive urgency about him. In the Kunstforum Montafon, which he co-founded in 1996 and which he has been managing in his function as artistic director ever since,

Roland Haas is waiting for visitors to the current photo exhibition on a summer afternoon. In vain. "It's far too hot for art", he says. "Nobody will come to visit today."

Despite that, he isn't exactly doing a rain dance. The native of the Montafon loves being out and about on the mountain himself too much to wish for rain. The forests and the cliffs, and above all the glaciers – they appear to be the natural habitat for Roland Haas, his inspiration, and the place he feels most alive. Hence it is only logical that the trained ski instructor ("something I am really proud of") now and again offers exceptional painting classes: "We go hiking or skiing, and paint on the way, sometimes even taking a small, portable easel with us." Haas is convinced that the physical exertion enables one to not only pervade such a mountain academically but also to experience it intuitively. "The results are different, more immediate perhaps, less intellectually inclined."

He says that with a smile that leaves room for doubt. Is he serious? Yes, very serious. However, he understands if somebody doesn't get it straight away. If, for example, they haven't hiked as far as he has on his own on the Azores, in Norway, Svalbard, Greenland, Canada, Nepal, New Zealand, Peru, Patagonia and the Tierra del Fuego. Everywhere he has been, he has translated his impressions into art, painted "glaciers in a texture like the spots on cowskin, crannied, criss-crossed by the tracks of droplets and the structure of the brush, the glacier tongue, the thaw and the destruction clearly perceptible, above all the motion, the elasticity of ice...". That is what art critic Karlheinz Pichler once wrote about Haas's work. Admittedly, it sounds a tad convoluted and doesn't really seem to befit the friendly, athletic man in his mid-fifties who, in the Kunstforum Montafon, talks about his early days as an artist.

"My older brother Georg Friedrich studied music and is now one of the most renowned composers in Austria. When I told my father I wanted to study art, he wasn't what you would call impressed." He wanted at least one of his sons to study something respectable, so when Haas studied painting in Vienna, he also qualified as an art teacher. And trained as a state-approved ski instructor.

Roland Haas likes to keep busy, running summer academies or even teaching at an American university as a visiting lecturer. He is also the manager of the SilvrettAtelier, a cultural project which unites artists of all shades. He retains his curious nature and is always out and about, even as a father of three children, indeed as a grandfather and, as of recently, as a teacher employed at a school. "At the moment I am enjoying working with young people", says Haas, "yet I am sure I won't stop travelling and hiking." Art and the mountain – sometimes their call is louder, sometimes it is quieter. However, they will keep on calling for as long as Roland Haas lives.





Retaining a curious nature, getting out and about – these things are important for Roland Haas. The manager of the Kunstforum Montafon is a ski instructor – and an artist



Adrenaline rushes:
it is a rare occurrence indeed to see Nadine Wallner this calm – the young lady is the World Champion in freeriding

Nadine Wallner

Being free

She is the double World Champion in freeriding. She loves types of sport which are both demanding and creative



Freedom. For Nadine Wallner, who is in her mid-twenties, this means getting up at 4 a.m., tying her skis to her back, trudging up the mountain and waiting for the sun to rise. “Once you are on the mountain, that is the loveliest part of the day. Total freedom”, she says. Nadine Wallner isn’t that tall, she has a refreshing, attractive manner about her which immediately evokes images of ballet lessons and mellow folk songs. However, her delicate looks are deceptive: Nadine is a tough cookie or, as she puts it, “someone on the search for liminal experiences and challenges”.

It isn’t that hard to work out where she gets these ideas from – Nadine Wallner was brought up a stone’s throw from the Arlberg, could ski like lightning when still a child, a mountain guide for a father, a snow fanatic for a brother: “The mountains were my playground.” Then came the serious accident during her youth – the ski pole gouged her side, her spleen had to be taken out, the dream of a career in alpine sports was cut short. However, once Nadine Wallner was back on skis, she ended up in the discipline of freeriding. “I am glad about that decision now, since alpine skiing demands a great deal of discipline!” In her chosen type of sport, however, time is not of the essence. It isn’t really about competition either. “Freeriding is all about doing your own thing”, says Nadine Wallner, and describes the fascination of her type of sport as the golden average between a test of courage and the creative volition of style.

Listening to her, it sounds as if her outdoor pursuits on the mountain are more or less a casual pastime for hippies. Doing your own thing is a much-repeated phrase which you really must be a dab hand at, another key element is the harmonious community amongst riders, as is the concept of freedom. However, watching Nadine Wallner racing down the slopes, you immediately forget any notion of a hippy lifestyle. And then there’s the jumps! They certainly feature some circus-like moves – but without the safety net. No doubt about it – you need to be slightly mad to love such a crazy pastime! Nadine Wallner just smiles. Mad, yes. No doubt about that. Yet she is mad in a lovely way. The last thing she has time for in her life is boredom. No cable cars go up the mountain the twice World Champion is attracted to – on her back a rucksack which contains an airbag to protect her in the event of an avalanche. Dangerous? “I would prefer to call it a liminal experience of the just-about possible. Yet these experiences help me to grow.”

Nadine Wallner laughs a lot, and her Facebook account usually portrays her in a good mood in the snow. She studies in Innsbruck yet, firstly, she is a passionate professional athlete and, secondly, she is undoubtedly “not your regular student”. “I love being on the mountain far too much for that.” She has a steady boyfriend. However, he is well aware of her passion and knows how frequently she is away off “in motion” somewhere in the world, including as a Red Bull sponsored athlete for some time now. Yet he knows that Nadine will always return to the Arlberg: “I try to spend as much time as possible here. It’s my home, I feel good here, can recharge my batteries.”

Herwig Bauer

The party goes on

Without glassblowing and his love of football, there would be no such thing as the poolbar festival in Vorarlberg. At least, that is what the founder and organiser Herwig Bauer claims



The old swimming pool in Feldkirch buzzes like the transformer of a railway. There is a swarm of young people carrying loudspeakers from one hall to the next, lugging crates of beer and soft drinks about. This is the face of creative chaos when a mega event such as the annual poolbar festival is just three, four weeks away. The only problem is that the first concert is next Friday... Today is Tuesday and there is still no sign of Herwig Bauer. “That’s normal”, says a young man in spectacles which weren’t as hip in the 1960ies as they are today. “Herwig is never on time.”

When Herwig turns up at the swimming pool, 25 minutes late, with a great smile on his face, you immediately forget any notion of the poolbar festival starting late this year. Herwig Bauer, born in 1973, is well relaxed. The co-founder and manager of the poolbar festival grins: “Looks like it’s not quite ready, doesn’t it?” You could say that... He laughs. It doesn’t bother him. He proved his talent for organisation at an early age, organising a football tournament for 60 teams in his youth. Plus, Herwig Bauer has been organising the pool festival, a recent recipient of the Austrian Art Award, for 22 years. It was his idea, for instance, to bring Marilyn Manson to Vorarlberg – and he realised that idea. A man with such vision isn’t easily undone by a touch of chaos.

“I got the idea to concentrate the creative potential that was lying idle in Vorarlberg during a glass-blowing course”, he explains. That was back in 1993. One year later – in the gatehouse of the Landeskonservatorium back then – the poolbar festival was born. “I asked artists both well-known and unknown to offer courses on the subjects of painting, film, graphic design, photography and drama to interested Vorarlberg inhabitants.” The “Feldkircher KreAktiv-Wochen” were well received, and ended with a surprise: “Once the courses were over, the participants stayed on to party.”

The “Feldkircher KreAktiv-Wochen” was reborn the following year as the poolbar festival in the old swimming pool in Feldkirch. Without much bureaucratic to-do, Bauer and his friends applied a great deal of idealism to create an event which now shapes the annual summer of culture in Vorarlberg. The fact that he and his people took the structural shortcomings in hand in the form of an architecture competition they launched is symptomatic for the way in which the festival is managed: there’s no such thing as can’t! “That’s our problem, really”, acknowledges Herwig Bauer. “We kick-start so many projects that there’s never any money in it.”

Herwig Bauer actually has another job in Vienna – being a father, he cannot live from the festival alone. Has he ever thought of going back to Vienna, where he studied and worked for 16 years? “Not really. That’s the nice thing about it, that there are no universities in Vorarlberg”, says Herwig Bauer. “Everybody has to leave to study and to find their way in the world, but most people come back at some point, bringing with them their experiences.”





Well relaxed:
Herwig Bauer
invented the poolbar
festival. He is at his
best when things
get hectic

Extending your horizon

A very special form of hiking culture which goes by the name of "berge.hören" (listen to the mountains) has been established in the mountains around the Alpenstadt Bludenz. The show stopper: the artists simply go along on tour with the rest! The artists don't wait until the end of the tour to display their art - instead, they perform a couple of spontaneous cameos on the way. A cultural tour against an impressive alpine backdrop





Light and airy: alpine meadows and mountains function as the stage for the concert performed by "Martin Spengler und die foischn Wiener". Here's wishing you a great time!

From one artistic performance to the next: berge.hören combines hiking with music and literature



Passionate: music is made exclusively and with a great deal of lifeblood on the cultural hikes

A few chipper birds twitter in the trees over there, the grass beneath our feet is soft, a gentle breeze brings with it cool, clear air from the surrounding peaks. Even further away, smoke comes from the chimney, and its fine fragrance reveals how well our lunch is coming along. In front of us, nimble fingers pluck a string to produce a sonorous bass sound, accompanied by quietly hummed scales, feet tapping and heads nodding in time to the music. The musicians which make up “Martin Spengler und die foischn Wiener” rehearse before the opening concert – a small, exclusive performance up on the mountain played just for us.

» This project is aimed at anybody interested in culture. «

Miriam Schreinzer, initiator

You can experience this or a similar scene on one of the BludenzKultur cultural hikes. It is all about listening to the mountains, and this includes more than the many impressions of nature. As part of a small group, you hike through the mountains around Bludenz for half a day. Special feature: the involved musicians, writers or artists accompany the group, enabling plenty time for a chat, fascinating encounters and new impressions. Miriam Schreinzer, the initiator of the project, explains it thus: “I find it important to reach people who might otherwise have reservations regarding art and culture, who don’t go along to the theatre or a concert just like that.” Experiencing artists up close in the flesh on a totally normal hiking tour in the middle of a lovely countryside – what better combination could there possibly be?

The culinary interval at one of the mountain huts is a fixed part of the itinerary

Artistic performances are held at regular intervals: the next story or the next melody sounds in particularly attractive spots. This could be a blast of tango, or some Schrammel blues, or maybe Wienerlieder, classical-cum-pop music, or the artists’ own treasury of songs. The musicians play various instruments including the button accordion, the jaw harp, the bagpipes and other classical instruments. Naturally, the intonation for one voice or several voices is fervent. One thing the group



of hikers have in common is their admiration for the natural beauty that surrounds them.

Not only are the inspiring impressions par for the course – refreshments are ensured en route too. A culinary interval at one of the mountain huts is a fixed part of the itinerary with substantial, country-style dishes typical of the region being served up.

“berge.hören” – cultural and culinary hikes

It is under the slogan “berge.hören” (listen to the mountains) that cultural and culinary hikes are organised in the Brandnertal and in the Alpenstadt Bludenz. Joined by musicians from the genres of folk music and world music, the participants hike up to a mountain hut, experiencing new acoustic and visual impressions and, ultimately, culinary impressions in the mountain hut itself.

www.bludenz-kultur.at;
www.alpenregion-vorarlberg.com



The sound and place of music: “Martin Spengler und die foischen Wiener” sometimes perform in the middle of a path, sometimes with a fantastic view in front of the Fuchsbau mountain restaurant close to Bludenz



Everything is in motion

Peter Natter, philosopher from Vorarlberg, contemplates motion,
being active and the currents of life

Alongside the infamous “Hands up!”, the command “Don’t move!” was always the capital threat on the radio and the television. Movement is essential, without it nothing is possible. Yet the same applies to rest too. Roll up your sleeves, get things moving or, by means of a Mexican wave, let your favourite team know that you want to help them along on their success: there must be something going on, there must be something happening. Basically, movement is essential. “Don’t just sit around, do something!” has been the common set phrase for ever. On the other hand, the stillness, the quiet, the time out, the slowing down, the temporary holiday in a retreat, the superiority of the (near) inaccessibility in the mountains, on the oceans, in the deserts. The seemingly unavoidable movement too easily gets into the pull of phenomena such as speed, pace or progress, necessary activities get lost in simple meddling, the hectic busyness of the rat race.



Let me swing backwards
and forwards
in these thoughts
about motion. «

First of all, I am going to try with one of the most meditative movements I know: with that of the pendulum. Its movement is only accessible to one who stays motionless or who joins in the great flow of time. Let me swing backwards and forwards in these thoughts about motion, dear readers: swing between two great thinkers, i.e. exemplary moved movers: Albert Camus (1913–1960) and Blaise Pascal (1623–1662).

Camus proposed a surprising, indeed moving appraisal of Sisyphus, the poor chap who, as a punishment for his self-aggrandisement, is condemned by the gods to repeatedly push a stone uphill, to have it roll back down, to follow it, and to start the exercise all over again for all eternity. The philosopher demands that we consider Sisyphus a happy man in his eternal uphill-downhill movement. Yet: the focus of the happiness of the unlucky fellow is on the downhill movement when he follows the stone which rolls downhill of its own accord and, in particular, the focus is on the lack of sense, the lack of purpose of his activity. This intends to teach us not to interpret too much from the motion! It is what it is: the matter of course of life. As soon as it is overloaded with sense and purpose, the fun stops – never mind happiness!

As an antithesis, there is Blaise Pascal’s dictum according to which all human unhappiness comes from humans’ inability to stay at home quietly and peaceably. By all accounts, Pascal would appear to be right. We wish to move about between these apparent contradictions. There is enough space for exciting motion. Apropos exciting: “Man is a rope stretched between the animal and the superman”, is how Friedrich Nietzsche (1844–1900) phrased it. He was one of



the first proponents of the concept of movement. According to Nietzsche, who himself industriously hiked all over the Engadin, man doesn't acquire his truths by sitting about, he attains them through action!

While Sisyphus' happiness is based on the fact that something's going on in his life-after-death, ultimately, for Pascal, the mathematician, sitting still is a prerequisite for happiness by enabling the realisation of the greater movement of the world, or being moved, of becoming a part of it and participating in the movement of the world. The tourism state of Vorarlberg could be an El Dorado for such figurative balancing acts while hiking along mountain ridges. The rope that is stretched between Lake Constance and the Silvretta is a fantastic terrain for motion which generates rest, and for rest in which, as it is said so poetically and correctly, lies the power for motion.

What does motion mean in a tourism region such as Vorarlberg? It arises to a large extent from the state not only being a tourism region but also an area teeming with industry, commerce, craftsmanship and agriculture. It is also a densely networked or even, it could be said, a globalised little land which loses itself in order to belong to the world. Exports and the transfer of knowledge and data are subjects frequently under discussion. Motion in all directions is a constant. Numbers and figures must always be in motion as well: numbers of overnight stays, numbers of employees, turnover and utilisation figures. Always in motion and always upwards, since more is better. I don't like the idea that more necessarily implies better.

For when motion is the subject, there can only be one standard – the human. The human as the standard of all things is a principle of philosophy which is as old as it is hard to interpret. It can result in hubris or in self-abandonment. And yet: abandoning straightforwardness could be a decisive error, irrespective of which area of public or private life we are talking about.

»» And the
moral of
the story is?
At least it
makes you
feel good. «

An enormous asset of the tourism region of Vorarlberg is the topographic and cultural diversity despite its size. Mountains, lakes, towns, villages, art, leisure, action, festivals, trash and traditions. Vorarlberg swings between many poles, phenomena and points. It is a manageable size, which makes it accessible by moving about under one's own steam as a human. The state is small enough to hike through during a summer holiday, and large enough to rest there.

Now sounds an essential aspect of motion – time and, with it, phenomena such as acceleration or speed which have become so dominant. It is a malevolent anachronism that cars are still advertised by highlighting their acceleration rates ("0 to 60 in 3.4 seconds") rather than the extent to which they benefit their users, or not.

And the moral of the story is? Is one needed? At least it makes you feel good. What else should a moral do, if not make you feel good? Somehow we live in a state in which motion is suspicious. Why else are there so many motion sensors which illuminate even the most harmless of evening walkers every step of the way, which shed light on their motion as if it were suspicious in and of itself? To conclude, I feel compelled to take up the cudgels for Camus' Sisyphus over Pascal's stay-at-home. Take up the cudgels for Sisyphus, the mountain-climber, the steadfast patron saint of the much moved person if they take it upon themselves to realise their human standard. For that reason we have, and need, sitting rooms, in order to have ourselves moved (away) from their peace and quiet.

Treading water isn't motion – or is it? Not everything, not everywhere that things go forward is motion. Progress does not necessarily equal motion. They say that there is no progress in the things that really matter, yet an incredible amount of motion: in art, in philosophy, in being human, in life. What are you waiting for?!



Author Peter Natter

Peter Natter, born in 1958, studied Romance studies, philosophy and psychology. Natter, who also writes crime novels set in Vorarlberg, lives in Dornbirn, where he established a philosophy practice in 2005.

 www.natterphil.at



Journeys to architecture

Vorarlberg builds differently: brave, modern, with loads of local wood and glass. It is with a great deal of feeling for the location that the architects get down to their work – as you can find out on individual architecture tours

Do you love being out and about, appreciate natural beauties as much as you do architecture? And, on top of that, are one of those people who enjoy discovering new worlds at your own pace? Then Vorarlberg's architecture tours are perfect for you! You need nothing more than a smartphone or a tablet for the 11 half to full-day "architectours", each of which has a different theme of its own (see box). Two of the 11 tours cross the scenic Rhine valley and are entitled "Art & Culture"

routes: in the densely populated regions, the house builders and architects were faced with the particular task of harmoniously fitting the buildings into the landscape, at the same time coordinating their functionality with the partially urban lifestyle. The blend of traditional and contemporary building is the special focus of the "Old & New" routes, whilst other tours focus on the essential building material of timber on the "Timber & Material" routes or the unique landscape on the "Nature & Landscape" routes.

It is under the slogan "Village Spaces" that contemporary buildings in a rural setting are explored, which involves entire quarters and squares. The tour "Getting Things Done – The Maker's Choice" is also concerned with modern buildings. A view of "Crafts and Innovation" is just as important: unusual material structures and a high standard of quality form the indispensable foundation for Vorarlberg's architecture. The 11 tours are easy to negotiate by car or public transport, and there are plenty places for stopping off for refreshments wherever you go.

Land of the culture of building

The place for architecture: events, recommended hotels, exhibitions, tips and information, architecture tours – the website below is dedicated to the subject of the culture of building in Vorarlberg. The website also contains a free app of the architecture tours to download for Android and iPhone for when you're out and about.

 www.vorarlberg.travel/architecture



Stop! Architecture!

Harbours, bus stops, the Werkraumhaus and hiking – more architectural highlights

Discover architecture on foot

In the Bregenzerwald, hikes over several days follow the trails of architecture both old and new. The “Umgang Bregenzerwald” is a further exciting offer – 12 “Design Paths” take hikers through 13 villages in the Bregenzerwald on tours lasting between 1.5 and 4 hours each. Every walk features individually designed information columns which attract the attention to issues pertaining to architecture or the local way of life.

🌐 www.bregenzerwald.at

By bus to the big, wide world

Seven international architecture firms have come up with unusual designs for bus shelters in Krumbach. The project won a special award as part of the Austrian State Prize for Architecture. 🌐 www.kulturkrumbach.at



Vorarlberger Architektur Institut

To get people to talk about contemporary architecture, to further develop it and bring it alive – the Vorarlberger Architektur Institut vai has set itself the objective of consolidating the region’s culture of building over the long term and initiating a social dialogue. “The culture of building is something that affects all people” is the credo, and accordingly the programme is aimed at totally varied target groups. The range of offers covers excursions with expert architecture guides through to exhibitions and symposiums and collaborations with universities and architecture projects for children. The website contains the dates and details of the latest projects. 🌐 www.v-a-i.at

Harbour views

Visitors don’t just come here to admire smart yachts – with their clear forms, the well designed buildings of Rohner harbour in the Rhine delta are eye-catchers in their own right. 🌐 www.hafen-rohner.at

Lively tradition

Firing the next generation with enthusiasm and building a bridge between craftsmanship and architecture – the Werkraum enlivens and expands the traditional culture of building in the Bregenzerwald. Members’ exhibits can be viewed in the Werkraumhaus, designed by the multi-award winning architect Peter Zumthor. Tip: the “Handwerk + Form” exhibition is held every three years, most recently in 2015. 🌐 www.werkraum.at

Excursions to the exciting world of Vorarlberg culture

Entertaining, inspiring, awakening curiosity: an overview of fascinating occasions, art events and exhibitions



1

Big emotions: Bregenz Festival

Drama(s), love and much feeling: the Bregenz Festival continues to delight anew every year. The highlight of the festival is the scenery on the lake stage which is constructed every two years especially for the festival. Masterful operas are performed here, such as Mozart's Magic Flute, Verdi's Aida and Puccini's Tosca. The performances in the Festival Theatre are also worth a visit.

www.bregenzerfestspiele.com



2

Lech Classic Festival

The Lech Festival Orchestra and the Festival Choir accompany international vocal and instrumental soloists for five days. It has already featured the Piano Concerto K 414 in a string quartet version written by Mozart, Beethoven's triple concerto as well as Handel's Messiah and Mozart's Requiem.

www.lech-classic-music-festival.com

3

Early Middle Ages in the vorarlberg museum

The vorarlberg museum in Bregenz delights thanks not only to its architectural beauty – 16,000 flowers adorn the façade of the building, which also incorporates parts which are listed and enables fantastic views of Lake Constance. Changing exhibitions of artists from Vorarlberg promise interesting insights into the artistic and cultural history of Vorarlberg.

www.vorarlbergmuseum.at



4

Dance at the Bregenz Spring

Every spring, dance serves as a splendid opening to the cultural season in Bregenz. Every year, international ensembles present their productions in the Festival Theatre. The range is wide, from classical ballet through to contemporary dance. The Bregenz Spring is renowned for being a masterful fusion of dance, music, architecture and video art.

www.bregenzerfruehling.at



5

Schubertiade in Schwarzenberg

The Schubertiade – the world's biggest Schubert festival – makes a guest appearance in Schwarzenberg every year. Outstanding artists perform chamber concerts, piano evenings and master courses in the Angelika Kauffmann Hall. Hohenems is the location for the concerts of the Schubertiade on certain dates between May and October.

www.schubertiade.at

6

Gargellen: teatro caprile

One of the co-founders of the teatro caprile is actress Katharina Grabner from Vorarlberg. The theatre performs non-mainstream plays and doesn't have a fixed stage. You can experience the drama group every year in Gargellen in the High Montafon on a theatrical hike entitled "Grenzüberschreitungen und Fluchten" (Crossing borders and escapes), a play about the escape routes of those persecuted during the Nazi era. The ensemble was awarded the Tourism Innovation Prize for the second time in succession for this play in 2017. The drama group specialises in its own plays, premieres and cultural ties with Eastern Europe. Book at Montafon Tourismus.

www.montafon.at

7

Zwischentöne in the Montforthaus, Feldkirch

The Montforthaus in Feldkirch, which opened in January 2015, has launched a new series of events under the slogan "Montforter Zwischentöne. Timescales between dialogue and music". The around 40 individual events held on three dates in the winter, summer and autumn showcase the manifold options offered by the new centre for culture and congresses. Events featuring regional and international artists are also held – from small-scale salon dialogues through to major orchestral concerts.

www.montforthausfeldkirch.com



8

Contemporary art in the KUB

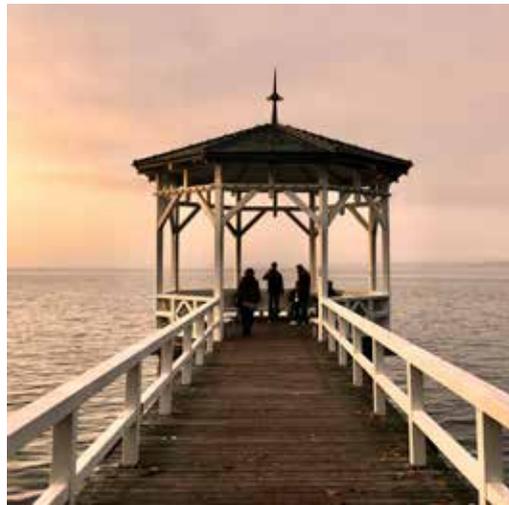
The Kunsthaus Bregenz is one of the most important museum buildings when it comes to contemporary architecture. The exhibitions present a stimulating dialogue between contemporary art, architecture and society. Highlights to date have included: Berlinde de Bruyckere, Dexter Sinister, Joan Mitchell, Heimo Zobernig and Amy Sillmann.

www.kunsthhaus-bregenz.at

Visit us on our social media channels and post
your holiday snaps from Vorarlberg

#visitvorarlberg

#myvorarlberg





You will also find Vorarlberg on these websites. Just click:

 vorarlberg.travel

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 [steller.co/ visitvorarlberg](https://steller.co/visitvorarlberg)



Hiking, dining and enjoyment

Hike through tranquil mountains, enjoy a multi-course meal on the way and find out any amount of interesting facts about the state and its people – the summer dining event in the Biosphärenpark Großes Walsertal combines all this for a perfect experience



What a great start: first of all an aperitif and appetisers in the Seilbahnstüble, followed by an hour's hike and now this: home-baked bread, fresh country-style butter and a cheese platter with the first slices of the just-ripened alpine cheese. This is served up as the second course by farmer Andrea Schwarzmann on the Steris alp. All around you, the extensive panorama of the mountains, and the air holds the promise of a sunny, clear summer afternoon.

Naturally, there are plenty of options for good food on the alps in Vorarlberg: however, the summer dining event in the Großes Walsertal turns the ingredients of regional produce, alpine traditions and hiking in the mountains into a very special culinary journey. Participants stop at four dining stations, each of which serves up one course of a four-course meal. Leaving the Steris alp, the hikers continue to the Breithorn hut on the Oberpartnom alp. There the Bickel family, that runs the hut, serves up alpine-style hash browns or the fried cheese dumplings known as "Kaspressknödel". A delicious dessert awaits you upon your return to the Seilbahnstüble.

The mountain station of Sonntag-Stein cable cars is the meeting point for the summer dining event. The net hiking time is around 3.5 to 4 hours. You can take the tour under your own steam or accompanied by a mountain guide.

www.alpenregion-vorarlberg.com

» Every alp has something unique and individual to offer. «

Andrea Schwarzmann, Steris alp



Tasting allowed:
up on the terrace of the Steris alp

Below: dessert in the Seilbahnstüble

Hiking, discovering and fine dining

Make your own cheese, enjoy a meal outdoors or dine on board a ship – further dining events to be found here

Culinary hikes and dining in the Bregenzerwald

Meals are served in the countryside – an exclusive five-course meal comprising regional specialities and accompanying wines. Guests dine in a special location in the great outdoors. A culinary hike is the perfect event for those who enjoy exercise between courses!

www.bregenzerwald.at

Gourmet boat trip

Dine at your leisure travelling along the shores of Lake Constance – on board the Hohentwiel paddle steamer. It offers four-course meals, a jazz brunch and authentic English afternoon tea.

www.hohentwiel.at

How cheese is made: the ideal addresses for all those who don't just want to buy their cheese but rather make it themselves: Ingo Metzler's alpine dairy school in Egg, the Käsehaus Montafon or the biosphärenpark.haus in the Großes Walsertal.







Winter athletes get a run for their money

The loveliest skiing areas between Kleinwalsertal and Montafon, magnificent deep-snow downhill runs and quiet moments off-piste – a fascinating journey of discovery through the most westerly federal state in Austria

TEXT: STEFAN HERBKE PHOTOS: PETER MATHIS

»» The pistes are soon light years away. «



In full dress: you have to be well equipped and have a local guide at your side in the deep snow to leave lovely curved lines in the pristine slope as you ski along free of cares, like here on the Kaltenberg

A white cloud of snow marks the spot where the downhill track in the powder snow comes to an abrupt end – and leads to a deep hole. A short time later I emerge snorting with laughter, putting both thumbs up. Everything is OK, even though my equipment is scattered to the winds and the snow has even got stuck inside my ski goggles. Heli's well-intended tip comes a bit late: "We need to protect the blanket of snow, so please try not to fall."

That's easy for Helmut Düringer – Heli for short – to say. The wiry mountain guide from the Bregenzerwald spends the entire winter on skis. Suitably confident and relaxed, he surfs through the deep snow on his wide skis. "I ski more slowly in a group," he says. "After all, I have to set an example." The downhill runs here in Vorarlberg aren't about speed anyway – instead, they are about the joint experience of an exceptional crossing on skis. Over the course of a week, "Ski Ride Vorarlberg" takes you from the Kleinwalsertal in a north-south direction past the Arlberg through the most westerly federal state in Austria as far as Gargellen in the Montafon. Skiing areas with their lifts, pistes and freeriding opportunities serve as fixed points, with individual legs between them being covered on touring skis. The small groups are accompanied by a mountain guide, their luggage is transported from hotel to hotel. Pure luxury!

As well as the mountain guide, we have a team manager who takes care of everything, including the weather – at least, when the forecast is good. But it isn't. Is that something we should be happy about? New snow can be pure joy, provided it falls at night time and it is sunny during the day. Thick clouds and poor vision, on the other hand, are not good conditions for skiing off-piste. Mountain guide Heli is confident that all will be fine. Plus, the first day of skiing is all about getting your bearings and practising. We need to familiarise ourselves with short climbs using tour binding and ski skins. We also receive instructions about how to react in the event of an avalanche, as we ski mainly off-piste through the mountains. For this reason, we all carry in our rucksacks avalanche search equipment, a probe and shovel. Moreover, each rucksack is equipped with an avalanche airbag. We now have to learn to handle it. Safety has top priority with Heli – as the mountain guide, he is responsible for our group.

The Walmendingerhorn in the head of the valley of the Kleinwalsertal is our first destination. A small skiing mountain offering a great panorama, sporty downhill runs and a surprising number of options away from the pistes. After a few swings, Heli is already aiming towards the first skiing route – whose unpleasantly icy bumps are anything but fun – and a short time later the first climb awaits us. First of all, we cover a short ridge where tramping along in the bottomless snow is pretty tough going. Then, in ski skins, we climb over short slopes to the Muttelbergkopf. The skiing area is soon light years away.

At least that is how we see it on this very isolated viewing observatory, where Heli explains to us the ways of

A whirl of snow on the unspoiled slope: here on the Arlberg, you can see as far down as the Auenfeld, covered in deep snow



crossing into the Bregenzerwald tomorrow. Then he heads towards a perfectly snow-covered furrow where there are no old ski tracks to spoil the fun in the deep snow. Enjoyment is perfect, you feel like cheering to yourself and singing. All that is left behind are isolated ski tracks – and a hefty hole in the middle.

On the second day the forecasted new snow is here – but so is the fog. Or, as Heli puts it so succinctly: “The view today is abysmal.” Yet that doesn’t matter – the mood amongst the group is up-beat. With poor vision and 20 cm of powder snow, we enjoy the freshly rolled pistes devoid of people in the Ifen skiing area. However, Heli has to amend the planned route into the Bregenzerwald – fog makes orientation in the middle of the massive snow dune landscape of the Gottesacker plateau on the Hohe Ifen impossible. Instead, he chooses an off-piste route via the Schwarzwasser hut. Helmut Düringer was involved in the planning of the “Ski Ride Vorarlberg” tour and, hence, is familiar with all off-piste routes. We are getting the benefit of it now.

Safety and equipment off the pistes

Leaving the secured slopes demands a great deal of experience and suitable safety equipment. In the form of the “Respect your Limits” campaign, Vorarlberg appeals to skiers to conduct themselves in a thoughtful manner off-piste in order to ensure protection of the environment and their own safety. Off-piste skiers are well advised to be accompanied by a guide familiar with the area. Basic avalanche equipment including avalanche search equipment, an avalanche probe and shovel are indispensable: however, skiers need to practise how to use it beforehand. Skiers are also advised to carry a rucksack bearing an integrated avalanche airbag. Freeride skis increase the fun in the deep snow – the wider, the better the bounce. Those who use a touring binding on their skis must be prepared to accept a compromise between skiing fun and weight. For the wider and, hence, heavier the ski is, the harder it is to go uphill.

www.respektiere-deine-grenzen.at

» We experience
endless slopes and sky-
high snow flanks. «





Memories: such a ski crossing is an occasion for experiencing all types of weather, as well as any amount of happy times in the sun



Next day, everything is well with our world. A bright blue sky awaits us. And that is for the great leg between the Hochtannbergpass as far as Lech, and into the legendary snow paradise of the Arlberg. The freshly rolled pistes look tempting but, even better, the new snow that fell last night tempts us to off-piste terrain. The skiing areas of Lech Zürs and Warth-Schröcken, connected by the Auenfeldjet as of last winter, are famed for their off-piste routes, many of which are even included in the maps of the pistes and quickly bear the traces of skiers. However, we have Heli and touring skis with ski skins for climbs. The reward: untouched deep-snow slopes. Heli has planned our tour such that we reach the Madlochjoch after the lift has already stopped operating. The skiers are nowhere to be seen, we are completely alone. The Klostertal is covered by a blanket of fog, all around us the shadows of the mountains are getting longer and, in the evening glow, we set off on our final descent of the day. This is the ultimate feeling of happiness!

The many deep-snow downhill runs leave behind traces, including in the material. The new snow was brilliant, yet now and again it concealed a seriously dangerous stone. With unpleasant consequences for the running surface. This becomes the responsibility of the team manager in the evening – he takes all the skis for a service whilst we rest our tired legs and drink to the day's skiing at the bar. Each time, everything has

already been seen to upon our arrival: we are already checked in, our shoes already await us in the ski cellar, our luggage is in our rooms. Three things are particularly important at the “Ski Ride Vorarlberg”: the combination of the individual skiing areas in one tour, the group experience with the mountain guide who should also be able to tell the group a lot about Vorarlberg. And, of course: perfect all-round service.

The Maroiköpfe, at an altitude of about 2,522 metres, are the first highlight of the fourth day. It sounds arduous, but it isn't, since we take lifts and cable cars for this tour. It's an elevation gain of only 150 metres from the mountain station on the Albonagrät to the summit – even taking it easy it takes less than half an hour. We need considerably longer to go downhill – after all, a downhill classic awaits us, with a difference in altitude of 1,300 metres to Langen. In between: endless slopes, short escarpments, a crossing beneath sky-high snow flanks and a windy forest path which resembles a bob run. At the bottom, a taxi is waiting to pick us up and take us to the Sonnenkopf skiing area – the second highlight of the day.

Beforehand, however, we partake of refreshments in the Muttjöchle mountain restaurant which sits atop the summit of the same name affording a lovely view. It goes without saying that the pasta tastes twice as good with a panoramic view.



Church in the snow: the small Walser village of Bürstegg is located close to Lech am Arlberg

Luxury in the mountains includes going up to unspoilt peaks such as the Erzberg close to Zürs. The view of the Trittkopf is included



The destination of the day, the Montafon, is within our reach – yet so far away. We could ski there directly, but from a skiing point of view it is more interesting to try out the off-piste options on the Sonnenkopf – and then move to the Montafon comfortably by team bus.

It is exceptionally quiet at the breakfast table on the final skiing day. We are all so replete with impressions and my legs are tired from the daily sorties to off-piste terrain. Only Heli still appears to be top fit. “We’ll meet up just before nine, head off into the skiing area and ask for the latest information at the Freeride Center.” The information point on the Grasjoch is located right in the middle of the skiing area and serves as an important port of call for all freeriders. We get up-to-date information on what the conditions are like and

which runs are possible. None, today. It is snowing, and you can hardly see the hand in front of you. Not a problem for Heli – the short winter via ferrata on the Zamangspitze (2,383 m) is always doable – the wire rope dictates the direction. Instead of the longest off-piste downhill run in the Montafon, we take the cable car down the mountain and go to a different skiing area. Visibility is better there, which ensures the grand finale: the downhill run in the deep snow to Gargellen is our ultimate highlight. This time, we don’t leave behind any holes.



Off you go!

On the "Ski Ride Vorarlberg", freeriders experience spacious deep-snow downhill runs, tranquil mountains and the loveliest skiing areas in Vorarlberg. A successful connection

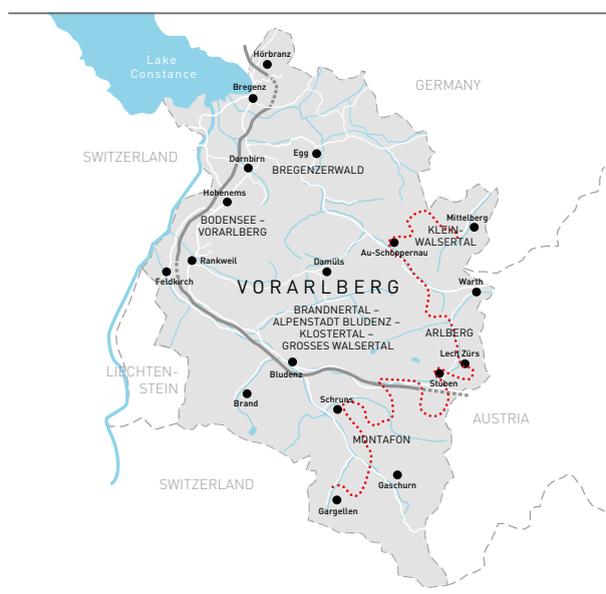
The route

Starting from the Kleinwalsertal and taking five days, the route covers the most westerly federal state in Austria. Going in a north-south direction, first of all you pass the Bregenzerwald, go from Warth am Hochtannberg to Lech Zürs on the third day and enjoy the legendary deep-snow options on the Arlberg. The itinerary on the fourth day features Albonagrat and Klösterle/Sonnenkopf with their popular off-piste terrain and a move to the Montafon. The final day of skiing takes you through the skiing area of Silvretta Montafon as far as Gargellen.

Arriving on a Sunday and departing on a Saturday, the small groups of maximum six people are out and about for a week.



The thrill of the downhill run: prepare for an exciting time from the Hochtannbergpass to Zürs. A helmet camera ensures long-lasting memories.



The skiing areas of the tour

Kleinwalsertal

Small yet exquisite: the freeriders focus on the Kanzelwand which scores points with its excellent off-piste routes and two long downhill runs into the valley. Short climbs take skiers to fantastic deep-snow slopes.

www.kleinwalsertal.com

Bregenzerwald

With an average of 11 metres of new snow per year, Warth-Schröcken is one of the skiing areas most assured of snow. At an altitude of 2,090 metres, the Diedamskopf close to Au-Schopperrau is famous for its panoramic view as far as Lake Constance.

www.bregenzerwald.at

Arlberg

The Arlberg offers an exceptional amount of snow, diversified pistes and endless opportunities away from it. The best way to experience this diversity is on the "Weißer Ring" ski safari. The skiing areas of Lech Zürs and Stuben are located on the Vorarlberg side of the Arlberg. Lech Zürs enjoys a long tradition and also offers an array of winter activities off the slopes. Fans of deep snow will find their pleasure here too.

www.skiarberg.at;
www.lechzuers.com

Klostertal

The Sonnenkopf in the Klostertal is home to exclusively natural snow pistes. A cable car holding up to eight passengers is the main means of transport for accessing the



Leaving your tracks in the snow: unspoilt slopes invite you to leave your mark on the countryside, and the journey itself leaves its mark and your head full of memories

extensive slopes which, in addition to the diversified pistes, offer many off-piste routes.

www.sonnenkopf.com

Montafon

The skiing areas on Kapell and Grasjoch are connected with the expansive interconnected skiing area of Gaschurn via the Novatal to St Gallenkirch. Silvretta Montafon is a varied area of pistes with the longest valley run in Vorarlberg (12 km, 1,700 metres difference in altitude) and a large back-country area. The small yet lovely skiing area of Gargellen is replete with impressive mountains and skiing as far as your front door.

www.montafon.at

All informations available at www.vorarlberg.travel/skiride

Winter in Vorarlberg is not just fun during the day...

...there is also plenty to do once darkness has set in. Here is a collection of our best tips for having adventures in the snow round the clock.



1

Face to face with huskies

Experience huskies in the flesh: dog enthusiasts both young and old can take tours in the Brandnertal, in Warth-Schröcken, in the Kleinwalsertal and in Mellau, including with the option of spending the night in the mountains. Husky-pulled sledge rides and snow-shoe hikes with the grey and white four-legged friends are particularly popular.

www.husky-toni.at; www.bauern-stube.at; www.huskyerwin.com; www.kleinwalsertal.com

2

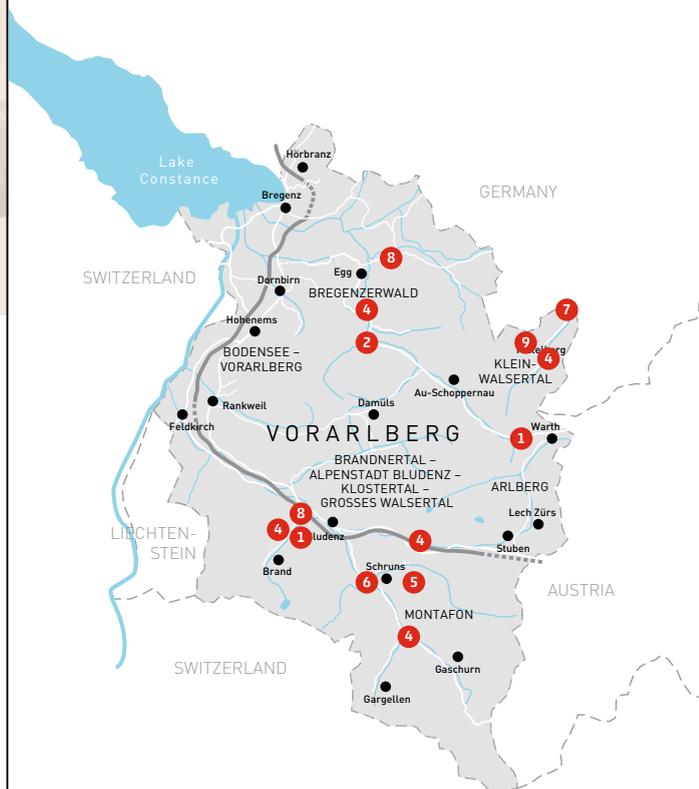
Long-distance hiking in the winter wonderland of the Bregenzerwald

A completely new experience: over three days, participants hike on quiet paths through the wintery Bregenzerwald. The hiking time is between two and four hours per day, with luggage being transferred from hotel to hotel. There is enough time during the hike to visit the Werkraumhaus in Andelsbuch or to take a panorama mountain ride in Bezau. www.bregenzerwald.at

3

Winter - interactive

Panorama maps of the skiing areas, snow heights and the current avalanche report are all available from Vorarlberg Tourismus. As are tips pertaining to events and activities such as hiking in the winter, cross-country skiing and tobogganing. You can download all this to your smartphone in the form of the Vorarlberg App.



4



Torchlit ramble in the spruce forest

Torchlit rambles are an atmospheric way of experiencing the mountains in the winter. They usually start at dusk. A wild, romantic tour with a meal of "Käsknöpfle" ends in Garfrescha in the skiing area of Silvretta Montafon. Guided torchlit rambles are also on offer in the Bregenzerwald, in the Kleinwalsertal, Klostertal and Brandnertal.



5

Snow-shoe hike in the gallery

Mining once played an essential role in the village of Bartholomäberg, which enjoys a sunny location. It is possible to discover the region and its history on snow shoes. The hike is rounded off with a guided tour of St. Anna gallery, 115 metres of which are accessible.

www.montafon.at

6

Flying Fox night of adventure

Starts off leisurely, then picks up the pace: the brave take a snow-shoe hike from the Golmer cable car in Latschau to the Kristakopf at dusk. An adrenaline rush awaits you at the start of the Flying Fox in Golm – a trip on the zip wire above the wintery Latschau reservoir. Harnessed up for safety, you are soon whizzing through the air. The evening is rounded off over a dinner of "Käsknöpfle".

www.golm.at/flying-fox

7

Hiking through a world of ice

These winter impressions can only be experienced here in Vorarlberg: snow and ice transform the Breitachklamm in the Kleinwalsertal into a frozen fairy-tale landscape. Icicles, terrific curtains of ice, congealed waterfalls and caves fascinate walkers. Torchlit hikes are also on offer.

www.kleinwalsertal.com

8

Full moon tours

A subtle, mystical light floods the landscape, quietness reigns, all you can hear is the crunching of snow under your feet. On nights with a full moon, guests can take atmospheric tours on snowshoes to experience the nature in Vorarlberg as though it were asleep. Nature guide Helga Rädler knows every nook and cranny, and informs guests about tradition and culture in Vorarlberg.

www.kulturinbewegung.at; www.bergaktiv.info

9

Snow-shoe hiking with a wellness factor

Shake off the stress of daily life, recharge your batteries, find your own rhythm. During this regenerative snow-shoe hike, guests find out more about the seven pillars of vitality and health. There is a special focus on the perception of nature and breathing.

www.kleinwalsertal.com



Almost as good
as flying



Experiencing the mountains while cycling – for a long time, this was only a good combination for the well-trained amongst us. Thanks to the e-bike, all that has changed now – it is now easier to scale greater heights and cycle through the countryside, such as on a nippy tour from Lake Constance to Piz Buin

TEXT: STEFAN NINK PHOTOS: PETER MATHIS

**The mountains aren't yet within grasp:
a short break for a picnic on the Old Rhine**



This here is an eagle,” he says, rolling the bicycle out of the workshop. “You’ll float on this. It’s like flying.” The man in the sports shop pats the front tyre, caressing it almost. The tyres are pretty thick and have an impressive tread. Everything about this bike looks like it is ready for a fight: the frame is bulky, the handlebars wide, the chain looks as if it could be used to heave a fallen mountain climber out of a gorge if need be. Everything is matt black. I am not sure whether eagle feathers have the same colour, but with me in its saddle it’ll be anything but eagle-like anyway! More like a crow. The man checks the tyre pressure, the chain, the gears right and left, and ponders whether he has forgotten anything. He has. He presses a key into my hand. A key for the lock for releasing the battery from the frame. “You won’t need it. The juice will be enough for what you have planned.”

What I have planned is a ride and a half. I am going to take the train from Dornbirn to Bregenz, the state capital located on Lake Constance. From there, the plan is to go to Partenen at the foot of the Silvretta, across

Vorarlberg, from the plain up to the mountains. Almost 100 kilometres, an elevation gain of 600 metres. The cycle path is perfect for leisurely tours by e-bike. And if you have had enough, you simply get on the train and take the easy way home. These are perfect framework conditions – it is easy to make adventurous plans. We intend on covering the distance in one day. All 100 kilometres of it. The crow and me.

And we are already out and about. This means: we are already taking our first break. In Bregenz. Next to the lake, on a bench, in the sun, right next to the “Milchpilz”. The Milchpilz has been an unofficial landmark of the town since the 1950s. You won’t find a better milkshake anywhere else in Vorarlberg – probably anywhere in the whole of Austria. It would be easy to stay put, the whole day, looking out towards the lake, if only I didn’t have those 100 kilometres ahead of me. So off we go! A quick glance at the map, the gear in “Eco” and the tyres are already purring on the Lake Constance cycling path, and the crow spreads its wings and takes off. Into an Austria that is in full bloom, past pastures and orchards and through meadows in which storks stalk frogs. The cycle path follows the River



Extra tour: cyclists have it good in Vorarlberg – they are even allowed to use paths that (almost) nobody else is allowed to use

Rhine and appears to know a short cut – in any case, we are in Hohenems in no time. Maybe the short detour for a dip in the Old Rhine helped... Between Lustenau and Hohenems. The crow may need a new battery at some point – five minutes in the water have done the trick for me.

“Here, the world looks as though it wants to reach for the stars.”

Vorarlberg has taken on a different appearance now. Until just now, the mountains were pastel drawings in the haze of the horizon. Now, all of a sudden, they are much closer. Some of them are even up close. The church in Hohenems nestles up to a steep cliff as if even the house of God itself has to seek protection. The following mountains are so covered with trees and vegetation that you feel as if you are cycling into a landscape framed in green. And soon I reach Feldkirch, where I stop for lunch.

A few years ago, they filmed some scenes for a James Bond film, “A Quantum of Solace”, in the historic old town, which must have been pretty exciting. In real

New energy for Vorarlberg

Vorarlberg has set itself an objective which is as formidable as it is honourable: the state wishes to be completely energy-autonomous by 2050. This means that precisely as much energy is harvested from regenerative sources of energy as is used. With this move, Vorarlberg wishes to liberate itself from needing to import expensive energy and the increasing prices of raw materials. Sustainable structures and new mobility concepts are to ensure a high quality of life, including for the generations to follow.

The energy plan is based on four pillars: energy savings, increased use of renewable sources of energy such as solar energy, wind energy, measures for greater energy efficiency as well as research, education and development. Several towns and villages are involved in this project, some of them already bear the Austrian e5 seal of quality which identifies particularly climate-friendly and energy-conscious municipal structures.

www.energieautonomie-vorarlberg.at

Tour information: from Lake Constance to Piz Puin

This is one steep trip, no doubt about it! The tour, which is about 100 kilometres in length, starts in Bregenz on Lake Constance at an altitude of about 400 metres and goes as far as Gaschurn at an altitude of about 980 metres. The first stretches along the River Rhine and through the Walgau are also suitable for families. The stretch from Gaschurn via Partenen and on to the windy Silvretta alpine road to the Bielerhöhe and Wiesbadener hut at the foot of Piz Buin presents seasoned cyclists with a challenge.

If you have athletic ambitions, you can complete the entire tour by e-bike in around eight or ten hours. Parts of the tour can be covered easily enough by normal bike. Whichever you prefer – you are well advised to schedule more time for taking lovely detours and, of course, for any amount of breaks to enjoy the view. Incidentally: if, despite the boost you get with the e-bike, you want to take an even more leisurely approach, you can simply get the train for some parts of the tour.

We rented the e-bike from “Intersport Montafon-Rankweil-Dornbirn” in Dornbirn (www.sportprofi-vorarlberg.at). The Montafon has a particularly dense network of rental, exchange and charging stations.

Exploring the towns:

urban detours make a nice change, such as here in the marketplace in Feldkirch



life, Feldkirch is much more tranquil. Much more relaxed, a lot more casual – almost Mediterranean in fact. At lunchtime, half the town sits over a glass of wine in the sunny marketplace. Not only that – the pasta is as good as it is in Italy.

A brief detour – not to Ludesch or Thüringerberg, but rather into the world of theory. If you have never been on an e-bike, it is feasible that you have the wrong idea about them. An e-bike isn't a moped that drives on its own – you have to pedal it. “Bicycle with pedal-assist system” is the official designation. It is possible to use the aforementioned pedal-assist system in stages. It feels like an invisible hand giving you a bit of a shove on your back. The motor provides more thrust from stage to stage: when it reaches the highest, the cyclist's efforts are doubled. So what exactly does that mean? It means that the crow sometimes does actually turn into an eagle! Even with me in the saddle.

Once you pass Nenzing, you realise how far you have already come by pedalling these past few hours. You have left flat Vorarlberg to get to alpine Vorarlberg: from Bludenz at the latest you feel that you are in the



Guaranteed great views:
e-bikers in the Montafon

Alps – thanks to the snow-covered peaks over on the horizon. In the Montafon there is no doubt that you are in the Montafon: there is no such thing as a flat stretch for 100 metres at a time. The Montafon as a whole is a region that reaches for the sky: the valley of the Ill is edged by mountain ranges towering into the sky, the Silvretta with its mountains over 3,000 metres high, the Rätikon with its lime pinnacles right next to it, on the other valley side the Verwall, all mountains, none of them exactly small. There is no claiming that geology has been restrained in the Montafon. Instead, the world looks as though it wants to reach for the stars here.

I change the battery in Schruns. Not because it is empty – I just want to find out what it is like to change a battery. All in all, it takes about the same length of time as it takes to change a tyre in Formula 1: a member of staff sees me getting off my bike and is already holding the battery when I enter the shop holding the old one. She wants a signature, and that was it. A minute later, and the crow is full of power again. To make getting off my bike worthwhile, I go and sit in the beer garden opposite. And order a shandy.



E-biking in the Montafon

Destination of longing – the mountains. Here are some recommended tours for memorable e-bike trips:

Then it is late afternoon and the valley becomes increasingly narrow, then I find myself in Partenen which stands guard ahead of the winding roads of the Silvretta alpine road. Soon back, in Gaschurn, I will have to part from the crowd. From there, I will take the bus to Schruns and, from there, continue to Bregenz by train. For a moment, I am tempted to bestow the crowd with wings once again and, with a new battery, to climb up to the reservoir at the foot of Piz Buin, 2,300 metres above sea level, where you can practically touch the clouds. Then I discover the words “thermal baths” on a hotel. The words “sauna” and “Vorarlberg specialties” do it for me and that is the end of any idea about taking the windy roads. Even e-bikers need to visit the charging station every now and again...

Further details about this (Lake Constance to the Silvretta) and other tours are available from

 [touren.vorarlberg.travel](https://www.touren.vorarlberg.travel)

For lovers of leisure – the panorama tour: this tour shows you the loveliest views – on the circuit of over 15 kilometres from Bartholomäberg. The short climbs mean that inexperienced cyclists and e-bikers alike can easily accomplish the route. Despite the little effort needed, rewards await in the form of several unspoilt mountain lakes and fascinating mountain sceneries.

For families – the bathing tour: guaranteed to be an all-round refreshing tour. The circular tour from Schruns to Partenen and back, around 36 kilometres in length, offers several bathing options for cyclists both big and small, such as the Aquarena all-weather pool in St. Gallenkirch, the Mountain Beach in Gaschurn, the Partenen open-air pool and the Alpenbad Montafon in Schruns-Tschagguns. Pure cycling time is around two and a half hours, and the degree of difficulty is easy.

 www.montafon.at/biketouren





About the echo of the mountains and distant galaxies

Vorarlberg has exciting mountain experiences to offer – and lovely changes of scene on Lake Constance. Here is a selection of excursions for putting in motion your mind and soul

1

Climbing and solving puzzles on the Arlberg

Where does a closed door out in the middle of the countryside lead to? Lech Zürs am Arlberg is home to many an exciting puzzle, all of which are begging to be solved. Detectives both big and small can let their curiosity run riot on the Grüner Rätsel-Ring between Lech and the Rudalpe. With workbook in hand, the hikers set off and meet mythical and mysterious creatures on the way. Climbing, fishing, solving puzzles – many a challenge awaits, even though the route is just a walk. Incidentally, the Grüner Rätsel-Ring is part of the three-day circular Grüner Ring hiking path devised jointly by a sculptor and an author. Tip: buy the workbook, otherwise it is only half as much fun. Refreshments are available on the Rudalpe, which also features a water playground. www.lechzuers.com; www.dergruenering.at

2

Solving the “W” questions of the Alps

What do trees do? And where do the stones on the mountain come from? “NaturaSprünge” (nature jumps) is the name of an interactive nature trail in the Brandnertal. In a playful manner, interested parties find out how the Alps were formed, and about the importance of water and soil. The stations also provide insights into the animal and plant kingdoms as well as the topic of alpine hazards. The trail was designed in conjunction with the interactive inatura nature show in Dornbirn.

www.alpenregion-vorarlberg.com

3

Get close to the stars

You can take in the air of adventure during a camping trip in the Silvretta Montafon mountains. Enjoy a hearty bonfire meal every Tuesday. After a night spent in a cosy sleeping bag, campers can watch the sun slowly rising above the surrounding peaks. You then proceed to the Nova Stoba for your mountain breakfast.

www.montafon.at/alpines-campen



4

Immerse yourself in ancient times

Old trade routes, legendary figures and fascinating mountains: a long-distance hiking path follows the trails of the Walsers. In 25 stages it takes hikers to all the Walser villages in Vorarlberg, Liechtenstein and Tyrol. From the Brandnertal, the path goes from Triesenberg in Liechtenstein to Laterns and Damüls, into the Großes Walsertal, the Kleinwalsertal, across the Tannberg and the Silbertal as far as Galtür. A book entitled "Walserweg Vorarlberg" (Tyrolia publishing house) has been published (in German) about the cross-border trail. Incidentally: a trail with the Walsers as its subject has been established around Warth, Schröcken and Lech as well, comprising 57 stations.



5

Experience mountain pasture stories

Sculptures tell stories, trees grow with their roots upside down – and then there is the battle that was never fought: at 13 stations, the thematic trail in Montafon's Gauertal staged by artist Roland Haas offers unusual insights into the agricultural practice of the mountain pasture. Plaques bearing texts in the Montafon dialect explain the backgrounds. The QR code can call up the translation on your mobile phone.

www.alpkultour.com

6

Exploring Lake Constance

In the foreground: towns and villages on the shore. In the background: mountains, hills and orchards. A trip on Lake Constance opens up whole new vistas. From the harbour in Bregenz, the ships which make up the Lake Constance fleet serve interesting destinations around Lake Constance.

www.bodenseeschiffahrt.at

7

Wilderness days for children

How can I sneak unnoticed through the thicket to get as close as possible to animals? Which herbs and mushrooms taste good? The wilderness hike in the Brandnertal provides children with entirely new insights. It is held as part of the summer programme entitled "Bsundrige Zit" (special time). The Kleinwalsertal also offers children the chance to participate in a wilderness day. Children and their parents can experience nature up close twice a week: they look for paw prints, build a shelter and make a bonfire without using a lighter.

www.alpenregion-vorarlberg.com;
www.kleinwalsertal.com



8

From hut to hut with kids

Getting out and about, spending the night in a hut, taking time to play – this is how hiking is really fun! Bregenzerwald Tourismus offers individual family tours from hut to hut as package deals. They include two nights' accommodation in a dormitory in a hut and either breakfast or half board. www.bregenzerwald.at

9

Heading upwards to the sunrise

Set off at the crack of dawn, preferably bearing a headlight. Once you get to the top, you see the first rays of sun climbing above the mountains, spreading their magic across the landscape. Getting up early has been well rewarded. Guided sunrise hikes, including breakfast, to the Mondspitze (1,967 m) in the Brandnertal and to the Kanisfluh (2,044 m) close to Au in the Bregenzerwald. The sun also rises impressively on the Mohnenfluh (2,542 m) close to Lech Zürs am Arlberg.

Information and travel arrangements

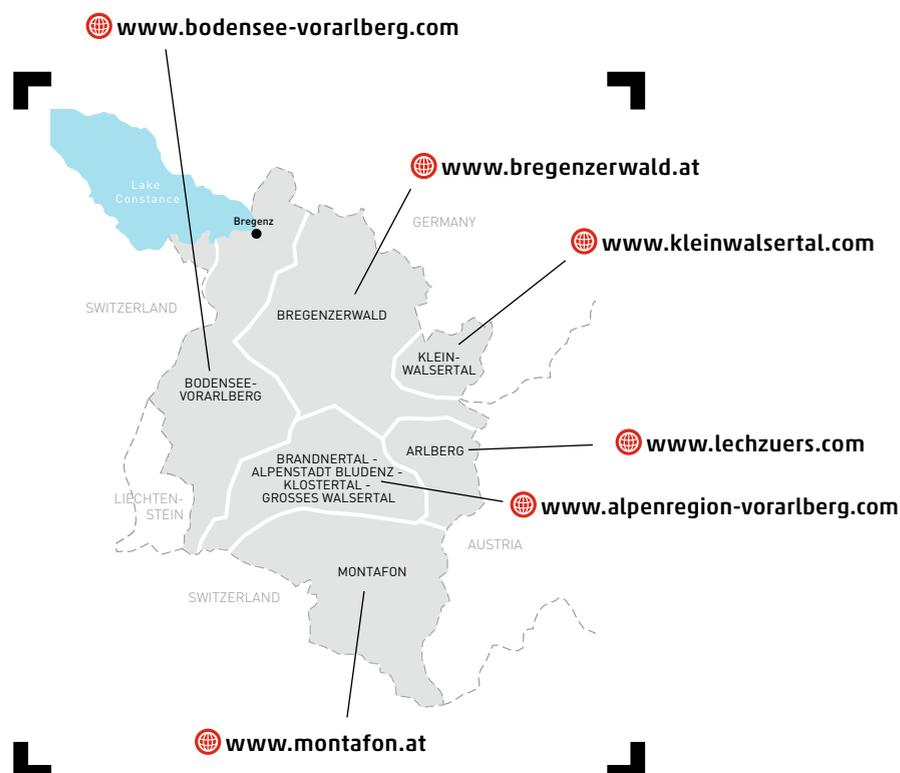
Here is an overview of everything you need for planning and reserving your holiday in Vorarlberg

Six regions full of diversity

Vorarlberg is 100 km long from north to south, and the great diversity in its scenery is impressive. An hour's drive from the Mediterranean-like shore of Lake Constance at an altitude of 400 metres via gently undulating hills takes you to the high mountains. Nature and lifestyle bestow each of the six holiday regions with a character of their own.

Vorarlberg interactive

Practical aids are available for the preparation of hikes and to help you find your way around once you get there. Interactive maps on www.vorarlberg.travel describe numerous paths in detail. The information about all routes can be downloaded and printed out. Via "layers", you can add further information, from sights through to restaurants, from photos through to bus stops.



Information and booking

If you have any questions regarding the planning of your holiday or require further information about any of the topics, please contact Vorarlberg Tourismus directly. You can also order brochures directly from the website:

www.vorarlberg.travel

T +43.(0)5572.377033-0



#visitvorarlberg #myvorarlberg

Vorarlberg Tourismus

Poststraße 11, Postfach 99, 6850 Dornbirn, Austria

info@vorarlberg.travel



Travelling to Vorarlberg

Vorarlberg is easy to reach by all traffic routes and all modes of transport. The public transport network is well developed.

... by car

Coming from the north via Singen – Lindau or Singen – St. Gallen, via Ulm – Lindau. Via Augsburg or Munich – Lindau or via Nuremberg – Lindau.

Coming from the west via Zurich – St. Gallen or Zurich – Walensee – Sargans.

Coming from the south via Como – San Bernadino – Chur, Brenner – Innsbruck or Reschenpass – Landeck.

Coming from the east via Innsbruck – Arlberg or via Reutte – Bregenzerwald (please note: the L 198 Lechtal Straße from Warth to Lech is usually closed in winter).

The Kleinwalsertal can be reached on the A 7 via Immenstadt and, further, via Sonthofen and Oberstdorf.

... by train

Austria: www.oebb.at; **Germany:** www.deutschebahn.com and www.dbautozug.de; **Switzerland:** www.sbb.ch

... by air

The closest airports (distance to Bregenz): **Bodensee-Airport Friedrichshafen** (D, 35 km), **St. Gallen-Alttenrhein** (CH, 20 km), **Allgäu-Airport Memmingen** (D, 77 km), **Zurich** (CH, 119 km), **Innsbruck** (A, 184 km)

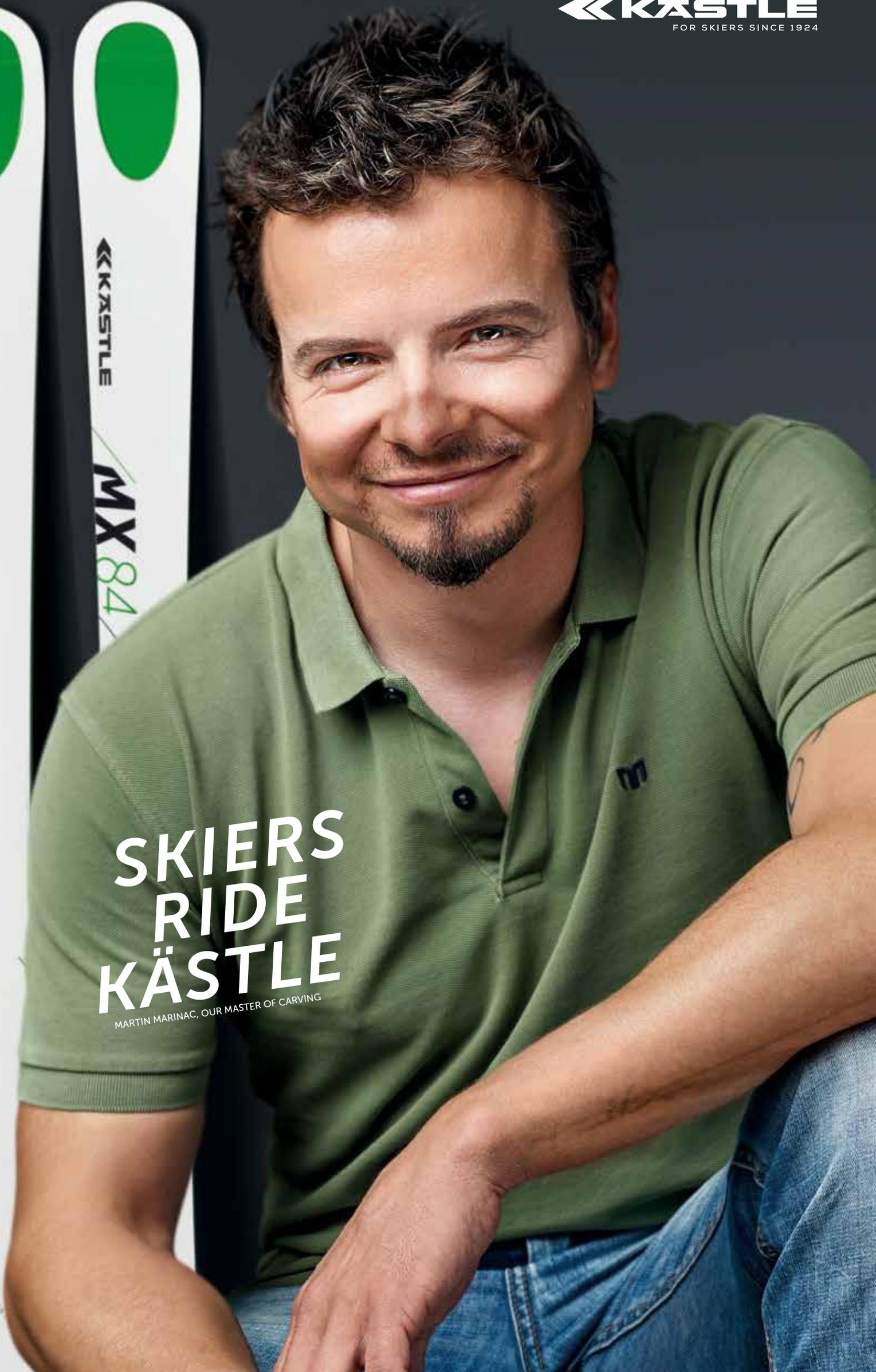
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