Vorarlberg Tourismus GmbH Vorarlberg State Tourist Board
CAMPUS V | Hintere Achmühlerstraße 1c | 6850 Dornbirn | Austria | +43.5572.37 70 33-0
info@vorarlberg.travel | www.vorarlberg.travel

Vorarlberg Tourism Award 2026: authentic experiences for holidays and leisure

Four main prizes and four recognition awards each for successful projects that delight guests and strengthen occupancy rates and regional added value

At this year's annual industry event, Vorarlberg State Tourist Board once again honored businesses and organizations with the Vorarlberg Tourism Award. Verner's Alpine Genusswelt, the Oswalda Hus, the Festival jazzambach, and the coffeehouse Ahna und Ähne each received a grand prize. Honorable mentions were awarded to Café Rosa & Rot, Hotel Stäfeli for its "Zeit Wert Geben" project, Montafon Tourismus for the theater hike "Grenzerfahrungen am Zauberberg," and the new bike park at Arena Alberschwende.

The awards sought to recognize "pioneering projects that, in line with Vorarlberg's tourism strategy, embody the values of authentic hospitality, sustainable development, cosmopolitan regional identity, and fair cooperation." Vorarlberg State Tourist Board honored four tourism businesses and four organizations each at the Treffpunkt.Tourismus 2026 event on November 16 at the Festspielhaus Bregenz. The industry's largest event of the year took place this year as part of the Vorarlberg Economic Chamber's Tourism Week.

Marco Tittler, State Councilor for Tourism, offered his congratulations: "The award-winning projects demonstrate the passion, creativity, and determination with which businesses and tourism organizations are breaking new ground. Behind them are visionary individuals who, with their innovative offerings, revitalize and strengthen their communities. They create new reasons for visitors to come or stay longer, thereby contributing to occupancy rates, employment, and economic value creation."

"We were very impressed by the high quality of all the submissions. The award-winning projects bring the values of the tourism strategy to life and inspire both locals and vacationers," said Joachim Kresser, jury chair and deputy managing director of Vorarlberg State Tourist Board.

Award-Winning Establishments: Unique Accommodations and Experiences

"Refreshingly bold in its presentation, yet authentically rooted in the region," the jury praised the Oswalda Hus and awarded it a grand prize. Guests stay in one of the hotel rooms or—most recently—in the "Spycher": the former granary has been converted into a charming chalet for 2 to 6 people—complete with a sauna, a panoramic bathtub, and views of the natural surroundings. A retreat with historic character and all the comforts of a hotel, featuring creative organic cuisine. The ingredients come from the hotel's permaculture garden, which the host couple, Joachim Müller and Cyrilla Riezlern, established in 2025.

For the jury, "Verner's Alpine World of Delights" is "a prime example of regionally rooted, cosmopolitan experiential tourism in the Montafon." Among other things, the farm received a top prize for its circular economy and collaborations with local hotels and manufacturers. The Bitschnau family raises the endemic Montafon stone sheep, processing the meat and wool into high-quality products. With the farm's own brewery, distillery, farm shop, herbal hikes, educational workshops, and culinary delights in the professional farm kitchen, guests are immersed in the local culinary culture.

Recognition for Vibrant and Relaxed locations

Elvira Flora and Eva Motter were delighted to receive an award: The sisters opened Café Rosa & Rot in Hohenems in February 2026. In doing so, they transformed the historic bowling alley at Villa Rosenthal into a gathering place with a special atmosphere that has already established itself in the city center.

The Hotel Stäfeli at the Arlberg also received recognition. Under the motto "Valuing Time," the Birk family offers guests a chance to slow down, simplify, and create space for connections. To that end, the "Changemaker & Slow Travel Hotel" features 1,235 books and a pop-up café. An uncompromisingly seasonal cuisine featuring regional products—whose producers the Stäfeli showcases—rounds out the experience.

Award-Winning Organizations: A Unique Coffeehouse and an International Festival

With the "Ahna und Ähne" coffeehouse in Bludenz, the association of the same name transformed a vacant space into a vibrant hub: it is run by retirees whose handmade delicacies, recipes, and stories have been met with great enthusiasm. Vorarlberg State Tourist Board deemed this socially conscious initiative—modeled after the Viennese concept—worthy of a grand prize.

Another grand prize went to the jazzambach festival, which for the past two years has been bringing together regional up-and-coming talent with well-known artists every February. According to the jury, the association—led by artistic director David Helbock—has succeeded in inspiring travel with its keen sense of the musical genre. Smart partnerships with local hotels further cater to international jazz enthusiasts.

A Cultural Experience in the Great Outdoors and a Popular Sports Offering

The new Montafon theater hike "Grenzerfahrungen am Zauberberg" was created by teatro caprile in cooperation with the Montafon museums, local partners, and Montafon Tourismus GmbH, which submitted the project. In 16 scenes set amid the natural landscape of Gargellen, the theater group brings regional history to life before the audience's eyes. This summer cultural experience earned recognition for its "continuity."

Another award went to the "Shred Society—Association for the Promotion of Cycling Culture in Alberschwende." With the help of the municipality, regional businesses, and sponsors, the group established the bike park at the Alberschwende Arena, which cycling enthusiasts of all ages can use free of charge. The trails are also popular with visitors from the surrounding area. The jury was impressed by how this private initiative has developed into a tourist magnet.

Factbox: Vorarlberg Tourism Award 2026:
Outstanding Businesses – Main Prizes:
Verner's Alpine World of Delights in the Montafon, Bartholomäberg
Oswalda Hus, Riezlern

Outstanding Businesses – Recognition Awards:
Café Rosa & Rot, Hohenems
Hotel Stäfeli, Lech am Arlberg

Organizations & Institutions – Main Prizes:
Ahna und Ähne Association – Coffeehouse, Bludenz
Verein jazzambach – Music Festival, Götzis

Organizations & Institutions – Recognition Awards:
Montafon Tourismus GmbH – Montafon Theater Hike: Collaborative project between Teatro Caprile, Montafon Museums, Montafon Tourismus, and regional partners, Gargellen
Shred Society – Association for the Promotion of Cycling Culture in Alberschwende – Bike Park at the Alberschwende Arena

Jury:

- **Joachim Kresser**, Deputy Managing Director of Vorarlberg State Tourist Board, Jury Chair
- **Judith Wellmann**, Bernardo Bader Architects, Gamsfels Architectural Practice Lochau, nominated by the WKV
- **Markus Rhomberg**, Science/Research, Lake Constance Four-Country Region Science Network
- **Katrin Löning**, Austrian Ecology Institute, ARGE natur vielfalt bauen, former mentor in the GVA Tourism Network
- **Dietmar Nußbaumer**, Host at Hotel & Restaurant Krone Hittisau, Representative from the GVA Steering Committee
- **Renate Breuß**, K3, art historian, specializing in craft culture and culinary arts
- **Johanna Raid**, Hotel Manager at Kleiner Löwe Stadthotel Bregenz, international experience, 2025 award winner

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For inquiries:
Vorarlberg Tourismus, Phone 0664/8369219, Email presse@vorarlberg.travel