

INNSBRUCK, TYROL, AND VORARLBERG

Updated by
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 Sights

★★★★★

 Restaurants

★★★★☆

 Hotels

★★★☆☆

 Shopping

★★☆☆☆

 Nightlife

★★★★☆

WELCOME TO INNSBRUCK, TYROL, AND VORARLBERG

TOP REASONS TO GO

★ The Ötztal Valley:

Outdoors enthusiasts love hiking through this region because of rich green pastures in summer and glittering expanses of white in winter.

★ Highly rated skiing areas:

Known around the world for its extensive and fashionable ski villages, from Kitzbühel to St. Anton am Arlberg, Tyrol often attracts celebrities and global glitterati to its resorts to experience the high-altitude good life, along with dedicated skiers keen to take on its challenging slopes.

★ Music in Bregenz:

With the sun setting over the Bodensee (Lake Constance) and the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra striking up the overture of *Rigoletto* on the world's biggest floating stage, this is an unparalleled place to see an opera or a musical.

★ Top hospitality in a top village:

The Post Lech is a bit like the Vorarlberg mountain village itself—full of charming understatement. You'll never want to leave.

1 Innsbruck. A picturesque and lively university city, Innsbruck is set against a backdrop of soaring mountain peaks and has twice been host of the Winter Olympic Games.

2 Hall in Tirol. This medieval Tyrolean town, ringed by Alpine peaks and known for its castle and mint dating back to the 13th century, is a popular half-day trip from Innsbruck.

3 Zell am Ziller. Once a center for gold-mining, this little village is now a center for outdoor adventures, from skiing and tobogganing in winter to rafting and zip-lining in summer.

4 Kitzbühel. One of Austria's hippest winter resorts, famed for its non-stop, 145-kilometer (90-mile) Ski Safari, "Kitz" is also home to several golf courses and a major tennis tournament.

5 Stubaital. Perhaps the most beautiful mountain valley in Tyrol (although there's plenty of competition), Stubaital's majestic glaciers attract skiers and hikers all year round.

6 Sölden. A winter sports hub with a reputation as a party town, Sölden has fresh snow from October to May and an extensive, high-speed ski lift network to make the most of it.



7 St. Anton am Arlberg. Another town with a big ski reputation, St. Anton is also an appealing summer destination with modern cable cars taking hikers and bikers up to over 9,000 feet.

8 Ischgl and Galtür. As well as a skier's dream, Ischgl is the cultural hub of the Poznaun Valley. A little farther along, Galtür is the region's premier mountain-climbing base.



9 Zürs. Across the state border in Vorarlberg, out-of-the-way Zürs is one of Austria's top ski destinations, with lifts jutting out from the tiny village in almost every direction.

10 Lech. Six miles further up the valley, Lech is a picture-perfect ski resort with plush resorts and regular celebrity visitors (though good luck spotting them behind the ski masks).

11 Schruns-Tschagguns. Situated in the heart of the Montafon Valley, Schruns-Tschagguns offers top-class skiing at significantly lower rates than the nearby Arlberg resorts.

12 Bregenz. Vorarlberg's state capital and cultural hub, Bregenz is known for its beautiful Bodensee waterfront, its medieval Upper Town, and its on-the-lake opera festival.

The provinces of Tyrol and Vorarlberg make up the western tip of Austria with Innsbruck, the capital of Tyrol, as the natural, historic, and economic center. These two provinces are so different from the rest of Austria that you might think you've crossed a border, and in a way you have. The frontier between Tyrol and the province of Salzburgerland to the east is defined by mountains; four passes routed over them are what make access possible. To the west of Tyrol lies Vorarlberg—"before the Arlberg"—the mountain range straddling the border between the two provinces.

In winter you'll find unrivaled skiing and tobogganing. The famous Arlberg ski resorts are cult destinations for skiers from all over the world. In summer, Bregenz, the historic state capital of Vorarlberg, becomes the "Summer Capital of Austria" when the Bregenz Festival opens with a performance by the Viennese Symphonic Orchestra. Thousands flock to see operas and musicals by the likes of Giuseppe Verdi, Georges Bizet, and Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, which take place on a huge floating stage with the Bodensee (Lake Constance) and the Swiss mountains as a backdrop.

Like most mountain peoples, Tyroleans are proud and independent—so much so that for many centuries the natives of

one narrow valley fastness had little communication with their "foreign" neighbors in the next valley. Similarly, until a tunnel was cut through the Arlberg range, Vorarlberg was effectively cut off from the rest of the country in winter. The province has much in common with its neighbor, Switzerland. Both peoples are descended from the same ancient Germanic tribes that flourished in the 3rd century BC.

MAJOR REGIONS

Innsbruck. Innsbruck makes a good starting point for exploring western Austria. It's a city that preserves the charm of ancient times and has lots to offer: fascinating culture, stellar restaurants, and trendy nightclubs.

Tyrol. Radiating out from Innsbruck in all directions is Tyrol, a picture-perfect province of soaring mountain peaks and plunging green valleys. At the eastern end of the region is Kitzbühel, while at the western end is St. Anton; both are among Austria's most popular winter vacation destinations, and a joy to visit all year round. In between the two extremes lie charming villages, glossy ski resorts, medieval castles, and some of the world's most beautiful mountain scenery. To the south of Innsbruck lies two famous valleys: the Stubaital, a long Alpine glen lined with glaciers and accessible by narrow-gauge tram; and the Ötztal, home to the popular skiing and mountaineering hub of Sölden. To the west of Innsbruck lies the upper Inn Valley, a spectacular region of family-run farms perched on mountainsides and steep granite peaks flanking narrow valleys leading to some of Austria's finest ski areas. These include St. Anton am Arlberg, Ischgl, and Galtür. You'll need to car to experience it all. Most visitors take Route 171 west from Innsbruck along the banks of the Inn, rather than the autobahn, which hugs the cliffs along the way.

Vorarlberg. Austria's westernmost province is completely mountainous. It borders Germany to the north, Switzerland and Liechtenstein to the west, and Switzerland again to the south. Its nickname is Ländle, meaning "tiny province." The region is a haven for those who love the great outdoors. At its eastern end, right on the border with Tyrol, it is home to two of the country's most famous and exclusive ski resorts: Zürs and Lech. There's nowhere better in Austria for celebrity-spotting.

Farther west, things get even more secluded, as Schruns-Tschagguns in the Montafon valley offers acres of getaway space and privacy—it's no wonder that Ernest Hemingway came to Schruns to write *The Sun Also Rises*.

At Vorarlberg's northwestern edge lies the state capital of Bregenz. This eminently-strollable city is home to the world-famous annual opera festival Bregenzer Festspiele, where shows are performed on a floating platform on the Bodensee (Lake Constance).

Planning

When to Go

The physical geography of Tyrol and Vorarlberg makes them perfect for enjoying outdoor life year-round. Ski-crazy travelers descend on the resorts during the winter months; in summer, when the mountains are awash with wildflowers, campers' tents spring up like mushrooms in the valleys as hikers, bikers, climbers, and spelunkers take advantage of the soaring peaks. High season for summer activities is July through August, while the skiing season begins in many resorts in late November or early December and can go on until early May in the higher ski areas. If you're in Vorarlberg in summer, be sure to stop in Bregenz, when the city comes to life with the Bregenzer Festspiele (Bregenz Music Festival). Boat excursions to Switzerland and Germany are another must. You can even rent a boat and go out on the lake to do some fishing.

Getting Here and Around

AIR

All of Tyrol uses the Flughafen Innsbruck (Innsbruck Airport), three kilometers (two miles) west of the capital. It is served by a number of international airlines, including Austrian Airlines, British Airways, EasyJet, and Lufthansa. But for intercontinental flights, the main gateway airports for Tyrol and Vorarlberg are Munich in Germany and Zurich in Switzerland.

Zurich Airport is about 120 kilometers (75 miles) from Bregenz, with several direct Euro City express trains a day making the 1½-hour journey on the way to Munich. There are also trains, sometimes direct or with only one change, from Zurich Airport to many stations in Tyrol. Munich Airport is more convenient for the eastern part of Tyrol, with Kitzbühel less than two hours by car or train from the Bavarian capital.

AIRPORT INFORMATION Innsbruck Airport. (INN) ☎ 0512/22525 🌐 www.innsbruck-airport.com.

AIRPORT TRANSFERS

From Innsbruck Airport, take the regular F Line bus into Innsbruck. It takes about 15 minutes to the train station, via the city center. Get your ticket (€2.30) from the machine by the bus stop, right outside the arrivals door, or from the bus driver. Taxis into Innsbruck should take no more than 10 minutes, and the fare is about €15.

From Zurich Airport to Bregenz, hop on one the regular express trains (1½ hours), or for Zürs and Lech there are winter bus transfers running several times a day Friday through Sunday. Book through the airline Swiss.

BUS

Bus lines operated by the railroads and post office connect all the towns and villages not served by train, using vehicles with snow chains when necessary in winter. Even so, some of the highest roads can become impassable for a few hours. And except in the most remote areas, buses are frequent enough that you can get around.

In Innsbruck the deluxe ski buses that depart from the Landestheater on Rennweg, across from the Hofburg, are the most convenient way to reach the six major ski areas outside the city. An Innsbruck Card (€66 for 72 hours) covers most routes on the transport system from the city and surrounding villages to

the ski areas, as well as entrance fees to many sights, attractions, cable cars, and ski lifts. Many hotels even provide shuttle service to the ski bus stop.

BUS INFORMATION Postbus. ☎ 05/1717 🌐 www.postbus.at.

CAR

Driving is the best way to see Tyrol and Vorarlberg, since it allows you to wander off the main routes at your leisure. The autobahns are fastest, but for scenery you're best off on the byways, as you can stop and admire the view. Be aware that roads can be treacherous in winter, and cars are not allowed on some mountain roads in the Arlberg without chains, which you can rent from many service stations. If you are renting a car in the winter, specify that you want winter tires—these will be sufficient to deal with fairly heavy snow on the road, although you will often be required to also carry snow chains. Roads with particularly attractive scenery are marked on high-way maps with a parallel green line. To drive on Austria's autobahn, you will need a *vignette*, or sticker, available at almost all service stations. A 10-day sticker costs €9.40; for 60 days it's €27.40.

FERRY

From April to October, passenger ships of the Vorarlberg Lines fleet connect Bregenz with Lindau, Friedrichshafen, Meersburg, and Constance on the German side of the lake. Remember to bring your passport.

BOAT INFORMATION Vorarlberg Lines. ☎ 05574/42868 🌐 www.vorarlberg-lines.at.

TRAIN

Direct trains from Munich serve Innsbruck. From here on, the line follows the Inn Valley to Landeck and St. Anton, where it plunges into an 11-kilometer (seven-mile) tunnel under the Arlberg range, emerging at Langen in Vorarlberg. It then continues to Bregenz, where you can change to the EuroCity Express to

Zurich (you can also change at Innsbruck for a more direct route to Zurich via Feldkirch) or go back to Munich. A line from Innsbruck to the south goes over the dramatic Brenner Pass (4,495 feet) into Italy.

Some of the most fascinating and memorable side trips can be made by rail. For example, two narrow-gauge lines steam out of Jenbach, one up to the Achensee, the other down to Mayrhofen in the Zillertal. From Innsbruck, the narrow-gauge Stubaitalbahn—which starts off as a regular city tram and morphs into a train as it ascends into the mountains—runs south to Telfes and Fulpmes.

TRAIN INFORMATION ÖBB. ☎ 05/1717 🌐 www.oebb.at.

Festivals

There is more here than just the Bregenz Festival. The annual Tyrolean calendar is packed with special events; a particularly charming festival is the Almbtrieb, when herds of cows come down from the high pastures in the fall, garlanded with flowers and surrounded by bands playing music. In winter, *fasching* is when young men parade through towns and villages wearing wooden masks as part of a ritual to scare away evil spirits, while the famous Hahnenkamm World Cup downhill ski race is held in Kitzbühel. There's also the Gauder Fest at Zell am Ziller, a traditional-costume festival, during the first weekend in May; the castle concerts and music and dance festivals in summer, primarily in Kufstein and Innsbruck; and the many village harvest festivals in the fall throughout Tyrol.

Hotels

In Innsbruck travelers do not seem to stay long, so there is a fast turnover and rooms are almost always available somewhere. Some travelers opt to set up their base not in town but *overlooking* it, on the Hungerburg Plateau to the north perhaps, or in one of the nearby villages perched on the slopes to the south. In any case, the Innsbruck Tourist Office at 🌐 www.innsbruck.info offers an information and booking source for Innsbruck and the surrounding villages.

Book in advance if you're traveling in the region, especially Vorarlberg, in the winter high season and in July and August. Room rates include taxes and service and, almost always, a breakfast buffet. In the resort towns dinner will be included. *Halbpension* (half-board), which are plans that include breakfast and dinner, are usually the best deal. Hotel rates vary widely by season, the off-peak periods being March through May and September through November. Most hotels take credit cards. Note that at the most expensive hotels in the resort towns of Zürs/Lech, Kitzbühel, St. Anton, and Sölden, rooms can reach up to (and even beyond) €500 a night. If you're out for savings, it's a good idea to find lodgings in small towns nearby rather than in the bigger towns or in the resorts themselves; local tourist offices can help you get situated, possibly even with accommodations in pensions (simple hotels) or *Bauernhöfe* (farmhouses). It's worth remembering that in Austria, cheap accommodations can still be of a very high standard, with large en suite rooms of sparkling cleanliness. Keep in mind that in hotel saunas and steam baths, nude people of both genders should be expected. Other patrons and management will often take great exception to guests who enter a sauna wearing a swimsuit. Children under certain ages are usually not admitted. *Hotel reviews have been shortened. For full information, visit Fodors.com.*

Restaurants

The gastronomic scene of Austria's westernmost provinces is as varied as its landscape: first-rate gourmet restaurants, traditional inns, rustic local taverns, as well as international chains and ethnic cuisine are all part of the mix. In small towns throughout the region restaurants are often the dining rooms of country inns, and there are plenty of these. Austria used to have a reputation for substantial but stereotypical dishes of meat, dumplings, and sauerkraut, but things have changed considerably. Gourmet meals are available at many wonderful restaurants, often at much more reasonable prices than is typical of Europe's high-class dining scene. That said, in many villages you'll find inns catering largely to local farm workers, where the old favorites are still the order of the day—prepare to be filled rather than thrilled.

Most hotel restaurants will be closed in the off-season, usually November and April. In ski season breakfast is typically served early enough for you to hit the slopes in good time, and dinner is timed so that exhausted skiers can get an early night in preparation for the next day.

Restaurants range from grand-hotel dining salons to little *Wirtshäuser*, rustic restaurants where you can enjoy hearty local specialties such as *Tyroler Gröstl* (a skillet dish made of ham or pork, potatoes, and onions, with caraway seeds, paprika, and parsley), *Knödel* (dumpling) soup, or *Schweinsbraten* (roast pork with sauerkraut), while sitting on highly polished (and rather hard) wooden seats. Don't forget to enjoy some of the fine Innsbruck coffeehouses, famous for their scrumptious cakes and cappuccino. *Restaurant reviews have been shortened. For full information, visit Fodors.com.*

What it Costs in Euros

\$	\$\$	\$\$\$	\$\$\$\$
RESTAURANTS			
under €12	€12–€17	€18–€22	over €22
HOTELS			
under €100	€100–€200	€201–€300	over €300

Visitor Information

The Innsbruck tourist office can be found on Burggraben in the heart of town. The headquarters for tourist information about Vorarlberg is in Bregenz. Other regional tourist offices (called either *Tourismusbüro*, *Verkehrsverein*, or *Fremdenverkehrsamt*) are found throughout the province using the contact information listed under particular towns. They are easily spotted—just look for the large “i” (for information) sign.

CONTACTS Austrian National Tourist Board.

☎ 00800/400–200–00 🌐 www.austria.info. **Innsbruck Tourist Office.** ☒ *Burggraben 3, Innsbruck* ☎ 0512/59850 🌐 www.innsbruck.info. **Tourist Information Vorarlberg.** ☒ *Poststrasse 11, Dornbirn* ☎ 05572/3770330 🌐 www.vorarlberg.at.

Innsbruck

166 km (103 miles) southwest of Salzburg. 476 km (295 miles) southwest of Vienna.

The capital of Tyrol is one of the most beautiful towns of its size anywhere in the world, owing much of its charm and fame to its unique location. To the north, the steep, sheer sides of the Alps rise, literally from the edge of the city, like a shimmering blue-and-white wall—an impressive backdrop for the mellowed green domes and red roofs of the Baroque town tucked below. To the south, the peaks of the Tuxer

Mountain Sports



Hiking and Climbing

Tyrol has an abundance of more than 35,000 miles of well-maintained mountain paths that thread the countryside. Hiking is one of the best ways to experience the truly awesome Alpine scenery, whether you just want to take a leisurely stroll around one of the crystalline lakes mirroring the towering mountains or trek your way to the top of one of the mighty peaks. Mountain climbing is a highly organized activity in Tyrol, a province that contains some of the greatest challenges to devotees of the sport. The instructors at the Alpine School Innsbruck are the best people to contact if you want to make arrangements for a mountain-climbing holiday.

Skiing

Downhill was practically invented in Tyrol. Legendary skiing master Hannes Schneider took the Norwegian art of cross-country skiing and adapted it to downhill running. No matter where your trip takes you, world-class—and often gut-scrambling—skiing is available, from the glamour of Kitzbühel in the east to the imposing peaks of St. Anton am Arlberg in the west.

In the area east of Innsbruck, chic **Kitzbühel** is perhaps most famous for its “Ski Safari,” a far-ranging system of ski lifts and trails, some floodlit at night, that allows you to ski for weeks without retracing your steps. **Alpbach** is one of the most popular resorts for families, with many not-too-challenging slopes and a reputation for being one of the most beautiful villages in Austria, full of heavily timbered traditional chalets surrounded by

thickly wooded runs. The area around is collectively known as the **Ski Welt** (Ski World), where the villages of **Soll**, **Ellmau**, **Scheffau**, **Itter**, **Going**, **Brixen im Thale**, **Westendorf**, **Hopfgarten**, and **Kelchsau** form Austria's largest linked skiing area. It's dotted with cozy, welcoming mountain huts, many of which are family-friendly.

Innsbruck itself is at the center of a group of resorts easily reached by bus from the city. The best time to ski Innsbruck's slopes is January through March.

Southwest of the city, in the heart of Tyrol, is the Ötz Valley. From the Ötztal station you can go by bus to **Sölden**, a resort at 4,500 feet that has become almost as well-known for its party scene as for its superb skiing. The up-and-comers of Austrian ski resorts are **Ischgl** and **Galtür** in the Paznaun Valley bordering Switzerland. Here, good snow and a long ski season are assured on high-altitude slopes with a top station at 9,422 feet.

Close to the Arlberg Pass is **St. Anton**, which proudly claims to have one of the finest ski schools in the world. Although it has some nice piste skiing suitable for intermediates, St. Anton is known for being a challenge in the form of long, tough, and steep mogul runs and spectacular off-piste. It was in the Arlberg in the 1920s that Hannes Schneider started the school that was to become the model for all others. A short bus ride to the top of the pass brings you to **St. Christoph**, at 5,800 feet. If you care to mingle with royalty and celebrities on the lifts, the upscale ski villages of **Zürs** and **Lech**, on the Vorarlberg side of the pass, are the places for you.

Ski Areas



and Stubai ranges undulate in the hazy purple distance.

Squeezed by the mountains and sharing the valley with the Inn River (Innsbruck means “bridge over the Inn”), the city is compact and very easy to explore on foot. Reminders of three historic figures abound: the local hero Andreas Hofer, whose band of patriots challenged Napoléon in 1809; Emperor Maximilian I (1459–1519); and Empress Maria Theresa (1717–80), the latter two responsible for much of the city’s architecture. Maximilian ruled the Holy Roman Empire from Innsbruck, and Maria Theresa, who was particularly fond of the city, spent a substantial amount of time here.

GETTING HERE AND AROUND

Innsbruck Airport is only minutes from Innsbruck city center and is linked by frequent bus service.

Direct trains serve Innsbruck from Munich, Vienna, Rome, and Zurich, and all arrive at the train station, Innsbruck Hauptbahnhof, at Südtyroler Platz. The station is outfitted with restaurants, cafes, a supermarket, and even a post office.

Innsbruck is connected by bus to other parts of Tyrol, and the bus terminal is beside the train station. In Innsbruck, most bus and streetcar routes begin or end at Maria-Theresien-Strasse, nearby Boznerplatz, or the main train station. One-way tickets cost €2.60 on the bus or streetcar, and you can transfer to another line with the same ticket as long as you continue in more or less the same direction in a single journey. You can get tickets from machines, or, at a slightly increased cost, from the driver.

If you’re driving, remember that the Altstadt (Old City) is a pedestrian zone. Private cars are not allowed on many streets, and parking requires vouchers that you buy from blue coin-operated dispensers found around parking areas. Fees are usually around €1 per half hour.

In Innsbruck taxis are not much faster than walking, particularly along the one-way streets and in the Old City. Basic fare is €6.20 for the first 1.3 kilometer (0.8 mile) and €1.90 per km after that, so that most rides within the city limits will amount to between €8 and €12. Innsbruck Taxi 4 You is a good option if you want to call a cab. There are set fares for longer journeys (to a ski resort from the train station or airport, for example), but if you’re prepared to haggle, these are negotiable, particularly on a quiet day when plenty of cabs are waiting in line. Let the driver know that you are aware of the alternatives available, such as train or bus.

Horse-drawn cabs, still a feature of Innsbruck life, can be hired at the stand in front of the Landestheater. Set the price before you head off; a half-hour ride will cost around €30.

Innsbruck’s main tourist office is open daily except Sundays, 9 am through 6 pm. Tyrol’s provincial tourist bureau, the Tyrol Werbung, is also in Innsbruck. The Österreichischer Alpenverein is the place to go for information on Alpine huts and mountaineering advice. It’s open weekdays 9 am to 4:30 pm, with a break for lunch; it’s mornings only on Fridays.

BUS INFORMATION **Postbus.** ☎ 05/1717
🌐 www.postbus.at.

TAXI INFORMATION **City Taxis.**
☎ 0800/201148 🌐 www.taxi-292915.at.
Innsbruck Taxi 4 You. ☎ 0664/926–5557
🌐 www.innsbruck-taxi4you.com.

TRAIN INFORMATION **Innsbruck Hauptbahnhof.** ☎ Südtyroler Platz. ÖBB.
☎ 05/1717 🌐 www.oebb.at.

VISITOR INFORMATION
CONTACTS **Innsbruck Tourist Office.**
☎ Burggraben 3 ☎ 0512/59850
🌐 www.innsbruck.info. **Österreichischer Alpenverein.** ☎ Olympiastrasse 37
☎ 0512/595470 🌐 www.alpenverein.at.



The Goldenes Dachl, the symbol of the city of Innsbruck, is tiled with 2,657 fire-gilded copper shingles.

Tirol Werbung. ☎ Maria-Theresien-Strasse 55 ☎ 0512/72720 🌐 www.tirol.at.

TOURS

The red **Sightseer** bus, a service of the Innsbruck Tourist Office, is the best way to see the sights of Innsbruck without walking. It features a recorded commentary in several languages, including English. There are two routes, both beginning from Maria-Theresien-Strasse in the Old City, but you can catch the bus from any of the nine marked stops, and jump off and on the bus whenever you like. The ride is free with your Innsbruck Card, or buy your ticket (€18) from the driver or at the tourist office.

Sights

Annasäule

MEMORIAL | St. Anne’s Column, erected in 1706, commemorates the withdrawal of Bavarian forces in the war of the Spanish Succession on St. Anne’s Day (July 26) in 1703. Along with the Triumphal Arch, it

is one of the two most important sights on Maria-Theresien-Strasse. From here there is a classic view of Innsbruck’s Altstadt (Old City), with the glorious Nordkette mountain range in the background. ☎ Maria-Theresien-Strasse 18.

Bergisel Ski Jump

RESTAURANT—SIGHT | This ski-jumping stadium towers over Innsbruck with a gloriously modern, concrete-and-glass observation deck and restaurant designed by world-celebrated architect Zaha Hadid. It opened in 2003, replacing the old stadium that no longer complied with modern requirements for ski jumping and crowd safety. There’s a café at the base area, and if you’re lucky you can have a beer while watching ski jumpers practice, even during the summer when they heavily water the slope (so they can still ski despite the lack of snow). ☎ Bergiselweg 3 ☎ 0512/589259 🌐 www.bergisel.info ☎ €10 ☹ Closed Tue. Nov.–May.

Club Innsbruck Card



Pick up a free Club Innsbruck card at your hotel for no-charge use of ski buses and reduced-charge ski-lift passes. For big savings, buy the all-inclusive **Innsbruck Card**, which gives you free admission to all museums, mountain cable cars, the Alpenzoo, and Schloss Ambras, plus free bus and tram transportation, including bus service to nearby **Hall in Tirol**. The card includes unlimited

ride-hopping onboard the big red **Sightseer** bus, which whisks you in air-conditioned comfort to all of the major sights, and even provides recorded commentary in English and five other languages. Cards are good for 24, 48, and 72 hours at €49, €55, and €66 respectively, with a 50% discount for children ages 6 to 15, and are available at the tourist office, on cable cars, and in larger museums.

Domkirche zu St. Jakob

RELIGIOUS SITE | Innsbruck's cathedral was built between 1717 and 1724 on the site of a 12th-century Romanesque church. Regarded as possibly the most important Baroque building in Tyrol, its main attraction is the painting of the Madonna by Lucas Cranach the Elder, dating from about 1530 and displayed above the high altar. The tomb of Archduke Maximilian III, Master of the Teutonic Knights, dating from 1620, can be seen in the north aisle. ☎ *Domplatz 6* ☎ 0512/583902 ☎ *www.dibk.at* ☎ *Free*.

Ferdinandeum (Tyrolean State Museum Ferdinandeum)

MUSEUM | This state museum with a striking Florentine Renaissance Revival-style facade houses Austria's largest collection of Gothic art and 19th- and 20th-century paintings, including works by Rembrandt, Brueghel, and Klimt. There are also musical instruments and medieval armor, along with special exhibitions. Here you'll find the original coats of arms from the Goldenes Dachl balcony. Chamber music concerts are offered throughout the year. ☎ *Museumstrasse 15* ☎ 0512/59489-109 ☎ *www.tiroler-landesmuseen.at* ☎ €12 combined ticket with Hofkirche, Volkskunstmuseum, and Zeughaus ☎ *Closed Mon.*

★ Goldenes Dachl (Golden Roof)

HOUSE | Any walking tour of Innsbruck should start at the Goldenes Dachl, which made famous the late-Gothic mansion whose balcony it covers. In fact, the roof is capped with 2,600 gilded copper tiles, and its refurbishment is said to have taken nearly 31 pounds of gold. The 15th-century house was owned by Maximilian I, who added a balcony in 1501 as a sort of "royal box" for watching street performances in the square below. The structure was altered and expanded at the beginning of the 18th century, and now only the loggia and the alcove are identifiable as original. The magnificent coats of arms representing Austria, Hungary, Burgundy, Milan, the Holy Roman Empire, Styria, Tyrol, and royal Germany are copies; you can see the originals in the Ferdinandeum. The Golden Roof building houses the **Goldenes Dachl Museum** with memorabilia and paintings from the life of Emperor Maximilian I. ☎ *Herzog-Friedrich-Strasse 15* ☎ 0512/5360-1441 ☎ €4.80 (Goldenes Dachl Museum) ☎ *Closed Mon.*

Grassmayr Bell Foundry

FACTORY | A visit to this 400-year-old bell foundry includes a tour of the foundry and a fascinating little museum, which will give you an idea of how bells are cast and tuned. There's also a sound

chamber where you can try your hand at bell ringing. Guided tours in English can be arranged. ☎ *Leopoldstrasse 53* ☎ 0512/59416 ☎ *www.grassmayr.at* ☎ €9 ☎ *Closed Sun. year-round and Sat. Oct.–May.*

Hofburg (Imperial Palace)

CASTLE/PALACE | One of Innsbruck's most historic attractions is the Hofburg, or Imperial Palace, which Maximilian I and Archduke Sigmund the Rich commissioned to be built in late-Gothic style in the 15th century. Center stage is the **Giant's Hall**—designated a marvel of the 18th century as soon as it was topped off with its magnificent trompe-l'oeil ceiling painted by Franz Anton Maulpertsch in 1775. The Rococo decoration and the portraits of Hapsburg ancestors in the ornate, white-and-gold great reception hall were added in the 18th century by the Empress Maria Theresa. Look for the portrait of "Primal" (Primrose)—to use the childhood nickname of the empress's daughter, Marie Antoinette. Skip the 3D show at the end. ☎ *Rennweg 1* ☎ 0512/587186 ☎ *www.hofburg-innsbruck.at* ☎ €9.50.

Hofkirche (Court Church)

RELIGIOUS SITE | Close by the Hofburg, the Court Church was built as a mausoleum for Maximilian I (although he is actually buried in Wiener Neustadt, south of Vienna). The emperor's ornate black-marble tomb is surrounded by 24 marble reliefs depicting his accomplishments, as well as 28 larger-than-life-size bronze statues of his ancestors (real and imagined), including the legendary King Arthur of England. Freedom fighter Andreas Hofer is also buried here. Don't miss the 16th-century **Silver Chapel**, up the stairs opposite the entrance, with its elaborate altar and silver Madonna. The chapel was built in 1578 to be the tomb of Archduke Ferdinand II and his wife, Philippine Welser, the daughter of a rich and powerful merchant family. ■ **TIP** → Visit

the chapel for picture taking in the morning; the blinding afternoon sun comes in directly behind the altar. ☎ *Universitätsstrasse 2* ☎ 0512/59489-514 ☎ €8; €12 combined ticket with Volkskunstmuseum, Ferdinandeum, and Zeughaus.

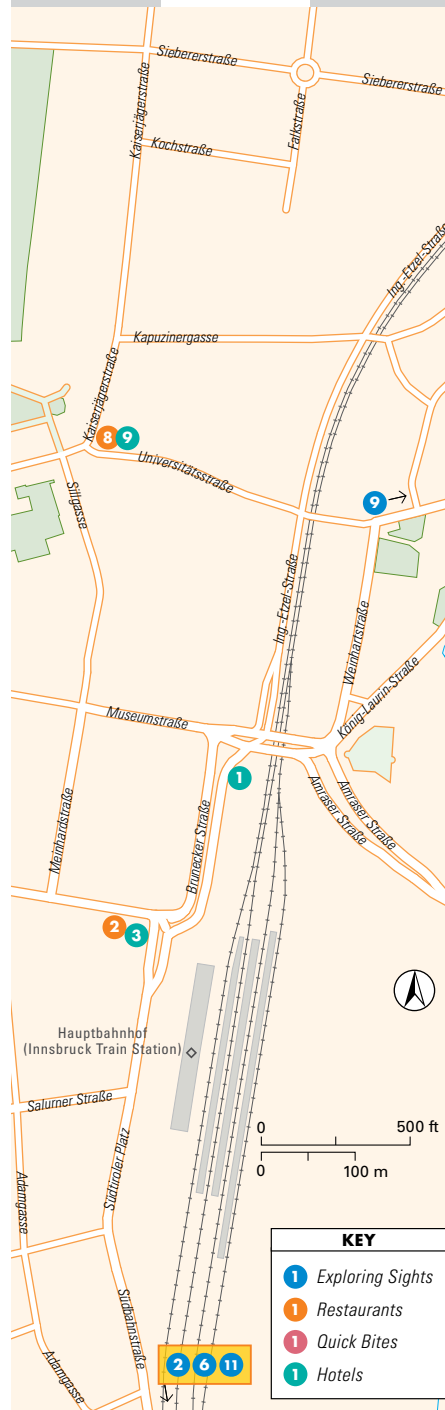
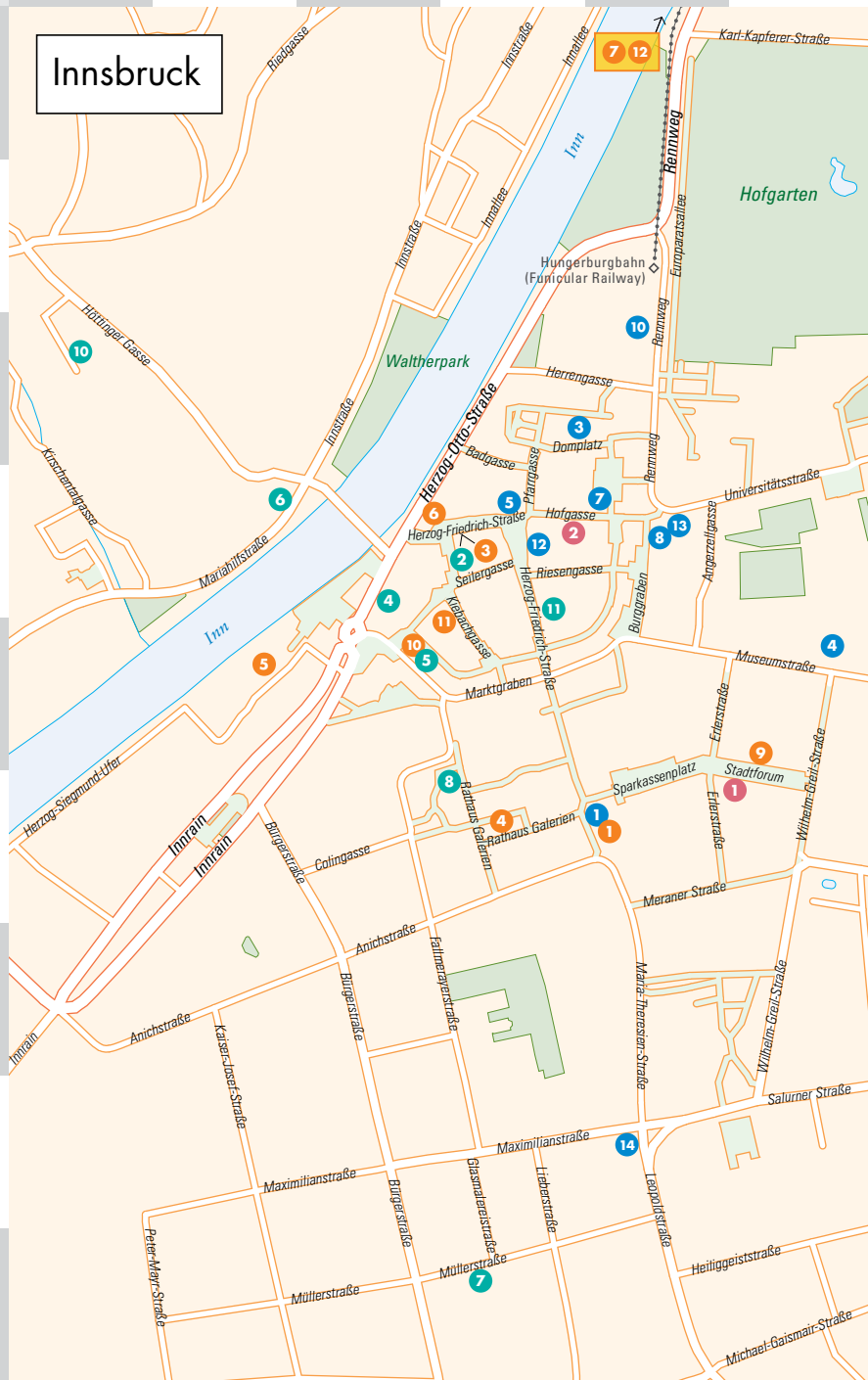
Museum im Zeughaus

MUSEUM | The late-Gothic secular building that now houses the Zeughaus Museum was once the arsenal of Maximilian I. Today, displays include cartography, mineralogy, music, hunting weapons, coins, aspects of Tyrol's culture, and the province's wars of independence. ☎ *Zeughausgasse 1* ☎ 0512/59489-11 ☎ *www.tiroler-landesmuseen.at* ☎ €12 combined ticket with Hofkirche, Volkskunstmuseum, and Ferdinandeum ☎ *Closed Mon.*

★ Nordkettenbahnen (Nordkette Cable Car)

VIEWPOINT | **FAMILY** | The Nordkette is Innsbruck's most famous mountain and it's possible to reach it directly from the city center. Hop on the funicular—the main station is just around the corner from the Hofburg—and in just eight minutes you'll be at the Hungerburg station, 2,822 feet above sea level. But that's just the start: from here, two more cable cars lead high into the mountains to the "Top Of Innsbruck," a viewing platform at 7,546 feet with staggering panoramic views of Innsbruck and the surrounding peaks. Along with the spectacular views, you can also enjoy a range of hiking and biking trails for every ability along the way, as well as restaurants, shops, cafes, and play parks for kids. There's also the **Alpenzoo**, which is home to an unusual collection of Alpine birds and animals, including many endangered species. Entry costs €17, including the Nordkettenbahnen up to the Hungerburg station. ☎ *Nordkette Cable Car Station, Rennweg 3* ☎ 0512/293344 ☎ *www.nordkette.com* ☎ *Funicular round-trip €9.90; cable-car round-trip €38.*

Innsbruck



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KEY

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Schloss Ambras

CASTLE/PALACE | This Renaissance castle, just outside Innsbruck but easily reached by regular or **Sightseer** bus, is now home to one of the oldest museums in the world. It all began when Archduke Ferdinand II was begrudgingly allowed to marry the commoner Philippine Welser, but only if the couple lived outside the city. He therefore had an existing 10th-century castle virtually rebuilt from scratch, and it was completed in 1556. He made sure the new castle, Schloss Ambras, had every luxury, including a sunken bath, acres of gardens, and statement rooms like the exquisite Spanish Hall, home to 27 full-length portraits of Tyrol rulers.

The initial 16th-century castle collections, started by avid collector Ferdinand, have been expanded over the years, and now contain a fascinating mix of natural, scientific, and artistic curios. In particular, look out for a suit of armor belonging to the court's giant Bartlmä Bont, and a series of portraits of "Hairy Man" Pedro Gonzalez and his children. ☎ *Schlossstrasse 20* ☎ 01525/24-4802 ☎ www.schlossambras-innsbruck.at ☎ Apr.-Oct., €12; Dec.-Mar., €8 ☎ Closed Nov.

Stadtturm

BUILDING | Innsbruck's looming City Tower was built in about 1460. It has a steep climb of 133 steps to the top, where the bulbous cupola was added in the 16th century, and from it there are magnificent views of the city and surrounding mountains. The 31-meter-high platform is a particularly good vantage point from which to view **Helbling House** on the corner across the square, right by Goldenes Dachl. This Gothic town house originally dates from the 15th century, though the colorful pink-and-white facade with its late-Baroque stuccos was added around 1730. ☎ *Herzog-Friedrich-Strasse 21* ☎ 0512/5871-13 ☎ €4.

Tiroler Volkskunstmuseum (Tyrolean Folk Art Museum)

MUSEUM | In the same complex as the Hofkirche (with the same entrance), this museum is regarded as the most important collection of folk art in the Alpine region. Its wood-paneled parlors house furniture, including entire room settings from old farmhouses and inns, decorated in styles from Gothic to Rococo. In particular, look out for the traditional Tyrolean tiled stoves. Other exhibits include costumes, farm implements, cow bells, carnival masks, and musical instruments. ☎ *Universitätsstrasse 2* ☎ 0512/59489-514 ☎ www.tiroler-landesmuseen.at ☎ €12 combined ticket with Hofkirche, Ferdinandeum, and Zeughaus.

Triumphforste

BUILDING | One of the icons of Innsbruck, the Roman-style Triumphal Arch was built in 1765 to commemorate both the marriage of emperor-to-be Leopold II (then Duke of Tuscany) to Spanish princess Maria Luisa, and the sudden death of Emperor Franz I, husband of Empress Maria Theresa. The south side clearly represents celebration, while the north side shows mourning motifs. ☎ *Leopoldstrasse 2*.

🍴 Restaurants

★ Das Schindler

\$\$\$\$ | **INTERNATIONAL** | One of Innsbruck's go-to gourmet experiences—its 14 Gault Millau points are a fine endorsement—this restaurant in the heart of the old town is known for its obsession with using local ingredients as much as possible, with absolutely no artificial additives. Details of suppliers, farms, and even local hunting grounds for the game on the menu are available for perusal. The interior is modern and the atmosphere is trendy. **Known for:** elegant decor; a true farm-to-table menu; very local ingredients. ☎ *Average main:* €28 ☎ *Maria-Theresien-Strasse 31* ☎ 0512/566969 ☎ www.dasschindler.at ☎ Closed Sun.

★ Europastüberl

\$\$\$ | **AUSTRIAN** | Here at the Grand Hotel Europa's acclaimed dining room you'll find creative cuisine that still draws on traditional recipes. Europastüberl achieves the difficult feat of combining coziness with elegance, with carved wood alcoves—the typical Tyrolean Stüberl—harboring intimate tables dressed with white linens and flickering candles. For more than 20 years, the signature dish here has been the Dover sole sautéed in butter. Other seasonal regional specialties include local game or house-made pastas like *tafelspitz*, an Austrian specialty of boiled beef and creamed spinach with fresh horseradish. The four- to seven-course prix-fixe menus are good options for those who can't settle on ordering just one thing, and the wine list includes a great selection of Austrian wines. **Known for:** the epitome of cozy Austrian elegance; excellent local wine menu; signature Dover sole sautéed in butter. ☎ *Average main:* €22 ☎ *Grand Hotel Europa, Südtirolerplatz 2* ☎ 0512/5931 ☎ www.grandhoteleuropa.at.

Goldener Adler

\$\$\$ | **AUSTRIAN** | This restaurant is as popular with locals as it is with visitors. The kitchen takes a modern approach to traditional dishes, with pork medallions topped with ham and Gorgonzola, and veal steaks ladled with a creamy herb sauce that's as steeped in flavor as the restaurant is steeped in history. The traditional dining rooms on the arcaded ground floor and the summer-only terrace are popular places to sit, the former both romantic and private, and the latter good for people-watching. Start with a glass of *Sekt* (an Austrian sparkling wine) flavored with a dash of cassis—a *kir royale*—as you peruse the menu. The restaurant is also the breakfast room of the Goldener Adler hotel. **Known for:** Innsbruck's oldest restaurant (opened in 1390); alfresco dining in the summer; hearty portions of classical Austrian dishes. ☎ *Average main:* €20 ☎ *Herzog-Friedrich-Strasse 6* ☎ 0512/571111 ☎ restaurant.goldeneradler.com.

★ Lichtblick

\$\$\$\$ | **ECLECTIC** | This little restaurant's location on the seventh floor of the chic Rathausgalerie is as lofty as its reputation. The entire restaurant is encased in glass, providing you with sensational views of the Old City, and thanks to the creative menu, it has gained the reputation of one of Innsbruck's best hidden gems. The kitchen offers captivating dishes made from fresh local ingredients. The menu changes often and the desserts are especially good. **Known for:** impressive location with wonderful views; imaginative and constantly changing menu; fantastic desserts. ☎ *Average main:* €23 ☎ *Rathaus Gallery, Maria-Theresienstrasse 18* ☎ 0512/566550 ☎ www.restaurant-lichtblick.at ☎ Closed Sun.

Markthalle

\$ | **AUSTRIAN** | This tidy indoor market offers plenty of farm-fresh produce, including a variety of cheeses, just-picked berries, and a wide choice of mushrooms. You'll also find pastas and other homemade delicacies, with its central location making it a good stop for an inexpensive lunch. It's basically a take-out place, but there are a few stand-up tables available to eat on. Go to the bakery for your choice of breads, and then browse the stalls to find your ideal fillings. There are usually more food stalls in the Marktplatz outside too. **Known for:** relaxed and bustling atmosphere; one of the city's best take-out lunch spots; amazing homemade breads. ☎ *Average main:* €5 ☎ *Herzog-Siegmund-Ufer 1-3, Marktplatz* ☎ 0512/4004-404 ☎ www.markthalle-innsbruck.at ☎ No credit cards ☎ Closed Sun.

Ottoburg

\$\$\$ | **AUSTRIAN** | This family-run restaurant offers excellent food, from burgers to Austrian specialties, and an extraordinary location in an ancient landmark. It was originally built in 1180, as a city watchtower, and retains much of its historical charm. Several of the

bay-window alcoves in the shuttered house have great views of the main square, while others overlook the river. Try the *Tafelspitz*, an Austrian specialty of boiled beef served with vegetables and horseradish, or the *Pfandl*, a fillet of pork and a steak served in an old-fashioned pan. On a sunny day, come early to get a table outside. **Known for:** truly historic atmosphere; delicious classic Austrian dishes; lovely outdoor seating. [3] *Average main: €18* ☒ *Herzog-Friedrich-Strasse 1* ☎ *0512/584338* 🌐 *www.ottoburg.at*.

Restaurant Seegrube

\$\$ | AUSTRIAN | FAMILY | Simply put, this restaurant in the Seegrube cableway station is one of the best dinners with a view in the country. At 6,500 feet high, the view of the city lights twinkling below makes a wonderful background for a romantic dinner. The food itself is mostly Tyrolean specialties including *gröstl*, a bacon, onion, and potato fry-up topped with a fried egg. During the week, a hearty breakfast including smoked salmon, sausages, and cheese feeds hungry hikers. During July and August, there is also a jazz brunch every Sunday, starting at 11 am. **Known for:** sublime views; delicious Tyrolean specialties; requires reservations in advance. [3] *Average main: €16* ☒ *Seegrube 1* ☎ *0512/303065* 🌐 *www.seegrube.at*.

Schwarzer Adler

\$\$\$ | AUSTRIAN | This intimate, romantic restaurant on the ground floor of the Hotel Schwarzer Adler has leaded-glass windows and rustic embellishments offering the perfect backdrop for a memorable meal (in summer, this includes dining on the rooftop terrace). The innovative chefs present a new menu every couple of months based on regional seasonal specialties. The year-round classics, such as garlic soup with croutons or three kinds of local dumplings served with sauerkraut, are delicious choices. The paintings on display are constantly changing, acting as exhibitions for local artists,

with many works for sale. **Known for:** charming and intimate interiors; dining room doubles as an art gallery; gorgeous outdoor dining. [3] *Average main: €22* ☒ *Kaiserjägerstrasse 2* ☎ *0512/587109* 🌐 *www.schwarzeradler-innsbruck.com*.

★ Sitzwohl

\$\$\$ | MEDITERRANEAN | Stylishly modern, with a functional yet intimate atmosphere, Sitzwohl has built up a solid reputation for superb cuisine, with an emphasis on Mediterranean and Tyrolean dishes. Chanterelle mushroom stew with dumplings or black gnocchi with wild salmon and fennel are favorites here. Lunchtime service is quick and efficient for business diners, but the evenings are more relaxed. In addition, chutneys, jams, and soups are available from the attached deli. **Known for:** attentive and quick service; some of the best food in the city; great produce from deli next door. [3] *Average main: €20* ☒ *Stadtforum, Gilmstrasse* ☎ *0512/562888* 🌐 *www.restaurantsitzwohl.at* ☺ *Closed Sun.*

Thai-Li

\$\$ | THAI | This Thai kitchen has quietly fashioned a reputation as one of the best and most popular dining spots in the Old Town. Thai-Li is short on elbow room, but long on excellent food presented with elegance and efficiency. Come for lunch, when you can sit outside at the tables on the cobble pavement. In the evening, start with skewers of grilled chicken and pork, fried prawns, and vegetables with a range of dipping sauces. For a main course, try one of the curry dishes, such as duck simmered in coconutty red curry. Beverages include a good selection of teas, coffees, and fruit juices. Not to be confused with Thai-Li-Ba across town. **Known for:** very affordable menu; possibly the best Thai food in Tyrol; classic curry dishes. [3] *Average main: €15* ☒ *Marktgraben 3* ☎ *0512/562813* 🌐 *www.thali.at* ☺ *Closed Mon.*

Weisses Rössl

\$\$ | AUSTRIAN | This is Innsbruck's oldest restaurant, and the hunting pedigree of the area is reflected by the array of antlers adorning the walls in the authentically rustic dining rooms. Be aware that this is not a vegetarian's natural habitat, but meat lovers will enjoy the solid local standards, such as *Tiroler Gröstl*, a tasty hash, and *Wiener schnitzel* (veal, or pork if you prefer, cutlet), both of which taste even better on the outside terrace in summer. Ask about the specials that don't appear on the menu, such as wild game or freshly picked mushrooms. Because the place hosts regular local gatherings it can get quite lively; for a quieter experience, request a table in one of the smaller stubes. **Known for:** historic and atmospheric; classic Austrian meat-heavy staples; lively atmosphere. [3] *Average main: €16* ☒ *Kiebachgasse 8* ☎ *0512/583057* 🌐 *www.roessl.at* ☺ *Closed Sun.*

★ Wirtshaus Schoneck

\$\$\$\$ | AUSTRIAN | With fine views of the city, an atmospheric bar, and veranda and garden for summer dining, this is one of Innsbruck's most exquisite restaurants. Housed in a former imperial hunting lodge across the River Inn from the city center, it has been earning fine-dining accolades since 1899, thanks to a menu that features Austrian staples with a sophisticated twist. The two-course business lunch is a great way to experience the menu at a reasonable price, with options like Viennese goulash with fried egg or bouillabaisse with garlic bread. The evening menus are always a surprise, with dishes decided by the chef that same day. **Known for:** excellent-value business lunches; impressive and historic setting; an ever-changing menu with Austrian classics. [3] *Average main: €26* ☒ *Weiherburggasse 6* ☎ *0512/272728* 🌐 *www.wirtshaus-schoneck.com* ☺ *Closed Sun.–Tues.*

Coffee and Quick Bites

Cafe Central

\$\$ | AUSTRIAN | Dark wooden paneling, crystal chandeliers, and the smell of coffee make this Viennese-style café a meeting point for intellectuals, artists, and students. International newspapers and magazines are available, as is a variety of cakes, pastries, and breakfast dishes. You can have breakfast any time of day, or choose something from the daily menu. A typical small dish to sample is *Kasnocken* (cheese dumplings with brown butter); more substantial choices might include traditional boiled beef. Enjoy your cappuccino with live piano accompaniment every Sunday from October to April. In summer, there is also terrace seating. **Known for:** film-noir atmosphere; breakfast available all day; live piano music and terrace seating in the summer. [3] *Average main: €15* ☒ *Hotel Central, Gilmstrasse 5* ☎ *0512/5920* 🌐 *www.hotel-cafe-central.at/en*.

Kröll

\$ | CONTEMPORARY | The small bakery and café, a few steps from the Goldenes Dachl, offers homemade strudel (sweet or savory fillings wrapped in a fine pastry) and Italian coffee specialties. The café opens at 6 am every day of the year, until 11 pm in the summer and 9 pm in the winter. **Known for:** savory and sweet strudels; popular (and busy) spot; excellent coffee menu. [3] *Average main: €8* ☒ *Hofgasse 6* ☎ *0512/574347* 🌐 *www.strudel-cafe.at* ☹ *No credit cards.*

Hotels

★ Adlers

\$\$ | HOTEL | One of Innsbruck's newer hotels, Adlers eclipses all with its panoramic vistas, and every room in the striking, supermodern building has floor-to-ceiling windows. **Pros:** best view in the city; handy for train station; spacious rooms. **Cons:** no on-site parking (€15-a-day parking nearby); windows don't open; a

little way from the prettiest part of town. **Rooms from:** €124 ☎ Bruneckerstasse 1 ☎ 0512/563100 🌐 www.adlers-innsbruck.com ➡ 75 rooms 🍷 No meals.

★ Gasthof Goldener Adler

\$\$ | HOTEL | Perfectly located in the heart of the Old Innsbruck's pedestrian area, this is said to be one of Europe's oldest hotels, and since 1390 it has welcomed nearly every king, emperor, duke, or poet who passed through Innsbruck. **Pros:** perfect location; atmosphere of living history; exceptional breakfast buffet. **Cons:** beware the small steps in room doorways; no on-site parking; portrait-heavy trad decor is not for everyone. **Rooms from:** €160 ☎ Herzog-Friedrich-Strasse 6 ☎ 0512/571111 🌐 www.goldeneradler.com ➡ 43 rooms 🍷 Free breakfast.

★ Grand Hotel Europa

\$\$ | HOTEL | Conveniently located opposite the train station, this top-notch hotel has provided lodging to the celebrated and wealthy in richly appointed, extremely comfortable rooms since it opened in 1869. **Pros:** spacious rooms; wonderful restaurant; opposite train station. **Cons:** on a busy square; a little way from the center; parking lot a walk away. **Rooms from:** €200 ☎ Südtirolerplatz 2 ☎ 0512/5931 🌐 www.grandhotteleuropainnsbruck.com ➡ 127 rooms 🍷 Free breakfast.

Hotel Innsbruck

\$\$ | HOTEL | With an ideal location in the heart of Innsbruck, there's an efficient and functional slant here rather than any wow factor—until you look out the window. **Pros:** lovely sauna area (including indoor pool); great location; family run. **Cons:** often has large groups; can be difficult to navigate; business feel rather than Tyrolean charm. **Rooms from:** €160 ☎ Innrain 3 ☎ 0512/598680 🌐 www.hotelinnsbruck.com ➡ 109 rooms 🍷 Free breakfast.

★ Hotel Maximilian

\$\$ | HOTEL | FAMILY | The clean, modern lines within the vaulted interior of a historic building are immediately striking in this hotel, a couple of minutes from the center of the Old Town. **Pros:** great location; English-language TV channels; striking modern luxury. **Cons:** lack of Tyrolean character; no on-site parking; some rooms on the small side. **Rooms from:** €160 ☎ Marktgraben 7–9 ☎ 0512/59967 🌐 www.hotel-maximilian.com ➡ 46 rooms 🍷 Free breakfast.

Mondschein

\$\$ | HOTEL | Among the city's oldest and pinkest houses, this warm and welcoming family-run hotel was built across the river from the Old Town in 1473. **Pros:** some rooms have "starry night sky" ceilings; has (expensive) on-site parking; convenient riverfront location. **Cons:** some rooms can be noisy; courtyard rooms are dark; some areas are looking tired. **Rooms from:** €115 ☎ Mariahilfstrasse 6 ☎ 0512/227840 🌐 www.mondschein.at ➡ 34 rooms 🍷 Free breakfast.

Nala Individuell Hotel

\$\$ | HOTEL | Quirky, colorful, and unapologetically contemporary, Nala is a breath of fresh air in a city dominated by heritage hotels. **Pros:** quirky and colorful rooms; inviting terrace with mountain views; breakfast buffet includes strudel. **Cons:** check out is at 10:30 am; a short walk from the center; too primary colored for some. **Rooms from:** €189 ☎ Müllerstrasse 15 ☎ 0512/584444 🌐 www.nala-hotel.at ➡ 57 rooms 🍷 Free breakfast.

The Penz

\$\$ | HOTEL | The ultramodern steel-and-glass architecture of this luxury hotel, designed by the renowned French architect Dominique Perrault, is a striking contrast to the Old Town and has a purposeful, business feel that will make traveling executives feel right at home. **Pros:** sleek design; great breakfast; popular rooftop bar. **Cons:** no spa or sauna; can feel a bit

sterile for some; rooms above delivery entrance are noisy. **Rooms from:** €130 ☎ Adolf-Pichler-Platz 3 ☎ 0512/5756–570 🌐 www.the-penz.com ➡ 94 rooms 🍷 Free breakfast.

★ Schwarzer Adler

\$\$ | HOTEL | The vaulted cellars of this 500-year-old building were once stables for Emperor Maximilian's horses; now they host glittering events in atmospheric surroundings, and the hotel attracts those in search of a romantic experience. **Pros:** lovely spa; romantic ambience; every room is different. **Cons:** only one elevator; some rooms face busy street; smoking still tolerated in the bar. **Rooms from:** €144 ☎ Kaiserjägerstrasse 2 ☎ 0512/587109 🌐 www.schwarzeradler-innsbruck.com ➡ 47 rooms 🍷 Free breakfast.

Tautermann

\$ | HOTEL | FAMILY | This solid red-shuttered house, a friendly family-run hotel, is within a five-minute walk of the city center, but is in a quiet area across the river. **Pros:** very quiet location outside the center; inexpensive rates; free parking. **Cons:** located up a steep hill; furnishings a little dated; no elevator. **Rooms from:** €90 ☎ Stamserfeld 5 ☎ 0512/281572 🌐 www.hotel-tautermann.at ➡ 32 rooms 🍷 Free breakfast.

Weisses Kreuz

\$\$ | HOTEL | FAMILY | Quirky, endearing, and in an unrivaled position over ancient stone arcades in the pedestrian heart of the Old Town, this hotel begs you to fall in love with it—and you might, as long as you put character and atmosphere above slick service and cutting-edge amenities. **Pros:** oozing with history and character; family-friendly and well located; breakfast served in original stube. **Cons:** parking is a short walk away; not all rooms are air-conditioned; touristy neighborhood can be noisy in evenings. **Rooms from:** €105 ☎ Herzog-Friedrich-Strasse 31 ☎ 0512/594790 🌐 www.weisseskreuz.at ➡ 48 rooms 🍷 Free breakfast.

Nightlife

Blue Chip

DANCE CLUBS | For dancing, this basement club on Landhaus Square is a leading hotspot and a magnet for students Wednesday through Saturday. DJs are highly rated, usually playing house music, hip-hop, and R&B. ☎ Wilhelm-Greil-Strasse 17 🌐 www.chip-ibk.com.

Casino Innsbruck

CASINOS | The jazzy casino next to the Marriott Hotel offers blackjack, baccarat, roulette, poker, and plenty of slot machines, as well as a bar. You must present your passport to enter the casino. Special meal-plus-gambling-chips packages are available in conjunction with the hotel. ☎ Salurner Strasse 15 ☎ 0512/59350 🌐 www.casinos.at/en/innsbruck.

Jimmy's Bar

BARS/PUBS | This upstairs bar is wildly popular and has built up a jazz-loving clientele. In the winter it's something of an après-ski hangout. You can expect lots of events here, from guest DJs to jam sessions and party nights. ☎ Wilhelm-Greil-Strasse 17 ☎ 0699/172–215–55 🌐 www.jimmys.at.

Krahvogel

BARS/PUBS | Known for its wide choice of beer—the drink of choice here rather than cocktails—Krahvogel is also something of a gastropub, with regional and international cuisine on offer. It's on one of Innsbruck's busiest shopping streets and attracts a good cross-section of customers, from tourists to local office workers and students. ☎ Anichstrasse 12 ☎ 0512/580149 🌐 www.facebook.com/krahvogel.

Performing Arts

It's said that Tyrol has more bandleaders than mayors. Folklore shows at the **Messehalle** and other spots around the city showcase authentic Tyrolean folk dancing, yodeling, and zither music. The tourist office and hotels have more details.

Festwochen der Alten Musik

FESTIVALS | Between mid-July and late August, the Festival of Early Music highlights music from the 14th to 18th centuries, performed by many of Europe's finest musicians in such dramatic settings as Innsbruck's beautiful Schloss Ambras and the Hofkirche. In summer there are frequent brass-band (*Musik-kapelle*) concerts in the Old Town. During the Renaissance and in the Baroque era, Innsbruck was one of Europe's most important centers for music, and this is the oldest existing festival to celebrate such early music. ☒ *Universitätsstrasse 1* ☎ 0512/5710-32 🌐 www.altemusik.at.

Kongresshaus

CONCERTS | The original congress house was built by Archduke Leopold V in 1629 as the first freestanding opera house north of the Alps, and in the 19th century it was converted into the Dogana, or customs house. Destroyed during World War II, its remains were used to create this modern congress and events center in 1973. Concerts take place in the modern Saal Tirol. ☒ *Rennweg 3* ☎ 0512/5936-1000 🌐 www.cmi.at/en.

Tanzsommer Innsbruck

DANCE | The world's premiere dance companies have been visiting Innsbruck between the last week in June and mid-July for this international dance festival since 1992. The world-renowned Dance Theatre of Harlem and the Sao Paulo Dance Company, as well as Maracana, Brazil's Grupo Corpo, and Sankai Juku, all feature regularly. Visitors can join in dance workshops, too. Tickets are available through the tourist office or the festival office. ☒ *Burggraben 3* ☎ 0512/577-677.

Tiroler Landestheater

CONCERTS | Innsbruck's principal theater is said to be the world's oldest German-speaking theater. It was built in 1654 as the court opera house, but totally renovated in the classical style in 1846 and modernized and extended in

the 1960s. Both operas and operettas are presented in the main hall, usually starting at 7:30 pm; plays and dance in the Kammerspiele start at 8 pm. Obtain tickets at the box office or at the city's main tourist office. ☒ *Rennweg 2* ☎ 0512/520744 🌐 www.landestheater.at.

Shopping

The best shops are along the arcaded Herzog-Friedrich-Strasse in the heart of the Altstadt; along its extension, Maria-Theresien-Strasse; and the adjoining streets Meraner Strasse and Anichstrasse. Innsbruck is the place to buy native Tyrolean clothing, particularly lederhosen (traditional brushed leather shorts and trousers) and loden (sturdy combed-wool jackets and vests). Look also for cut crystal and woodcarvings; locally handmade, delicate silver-filigree pins make fine gifts.

Boschi

GIFTS/SOUVENIRS | Reproductions of old pewterware, using the original molds when possible, are among the items you'll find here, along with locally produced, hand-decorated beer mugs with pewter lids. ☒ *Kiebachgasse 8* ☎ 0512/589224 🌐 www.boschi.at ☺ *Closed Sun.*

Christmas Markets

CRAFTS | For sheer holiday delight, nothing tops the traditional Christmas markets, which features wooden and glass handicrafts, Christmas-tree decorations, candles, and Tyrolean toys and loden costumes. There are half a dozen different markets around Innsbruck and its environs, but the highlight is the one in the heart of the Old Town. Here, market stalls are set up around the giant, illuminated Christmas tree next to the Goldenes Dachl. The markets are open from mid-November until 6 January. ☒ *Herzog-Friedrich-Strasse 15* 🌐 www.christkindlmarkt.cc/en/markets/maria-theresien-strasse ☺ *Closed Jan.-mid-Nov.*

Culinarium

WINE/SPIRITS | This is *the* shop to buy Austrian wine, which has come on leaps and bounds in recent years, as well as wonderful schnapps and rum. You can try everything before you buy, and the talkative, friendly owner will be happy to advise. ☒ *Pfarrgasse 1* ☎ 0512/890589 🌐 www.facebook.com/culinariuminnsbruck2020.

Galerie Thomas Flora

ART GALLERIES | The droll graphics by Tyrolean artist Paul Flora on sale here provide much to smile at, and maybe you'll even find something to take home. ☒ *Herzog-Friedrich-Strasse 5* ☎ 0512/577402.

Hubertus Moden Steinbock

CLOTHING | This is an outstanding source of dirndls, those attractive traditional costumes for women, with white blouses, dark skirts, and colorful aprons. It also has children's clothing. ☒ *Spar-kassenplatz 3* ☎ 0512/585092 🌐 www.steinbock.at ☺ *Closed Sun.*

Rathausgalerie

SHOPPING CENTERS/MALLS | Innsbruck's swish, central, glass-roofed indoor mall is home to luxury boutiques and world-famous brand names. Here you can shop, eat, and drink in style. ☒ *Maria-Theresien-Strasse 18* ☎ 0512/574861 🌐 www.rathausgalerien.at.

Swarovski Crystal Worlds

CERAMICS/GLASSWARE | This dazzling Old Town gallery features a dazzling array of crystal products from the world-renowned maker, whose headquarters is in nearby Wattens, east of Innsbruck. ☒ *Herzog-Friedrich-Strasse 39* ☎ 05224/51080 🌐 www.swarovski.com/innsbruck.

Tiroler Heimatwerk

CLOTHING | Make this your first stop for high-quality souvenirs. The extremely attractive shop carries textiles and finished clothing, ceramics, carved wooden chests, and some furniture, but don't expect a bargain. You can also

have clothing made to order. ☒ *Meraner Strasse 2* ☎ 0512/582320 🌐 www.heimatwerk.co.at ☺ *Closed Sun.*

Activities

GOLF

Golfclub Innsbruck-Igls

GOLF | It's the breathtaking views of surrounding mountains that make this a special golfing experience. About nine kilometers (5½ miles) outside Innsbruck, this club has two courses, an 18-hole championship course at Rinn and a nine-hole course at nearby Lans. Founded in 1935, the courses are among Austria's oldest, with concentric, partly hilly fairways on an ascending plateau. The golf club is open April through November. ☒ *Oberdorf 11, Rinn* ☎ 05223/78177 🌐 www.golfclub-innsbruck-igls.at ☒ *Rinn: €90 for 18 holes; Lans: €50 for 9 holes* 🏌️ *Rinn: 18 holes, 6622 yards, par 71; Lans: 9 holes, 4662 yards, par 33.*

HIKING

Both easy paths and extreme slopes await hikers and climbers. From June to October holders of the Innsbruck Card can take free, daily, guided mountain hikes. The tourist office has a special hiking brochure.

HORSEBACK RIDING

Reitclub Innsbruck (Campagnereitergesellschaft Tirol)

HORSEBACK RIDING | Horseback riding can be arranged through Reitclub Innsbruck, which is based in the village of Igls just outside Innsbruck. ☒ *Römerstrasse 50, Innsbruck-Igls* ☎ 0664/516-5505 🌐 www.reitclub-innsbruck.com.

ROCK CLIMBING

Alpine Auskunt

CLIMBING/MOUNTAINEERING | Whether you're an experienced climber or new learner, the man to contact for rock climbing in Tyrol is Mike Rutter at Alpine Auskunt. He has advice on everything from suitable climbing areas to guides

and courses. ☒ *Meinhardstrasse 7–11*
☎ 0512/587828 🌐 www.alpine-auskunft.at.

SKIING

Around Innsbruck you'll find everything from the beginner slopes of the Glungezer to the good intermediate skiing of Axamer Lizum and Patscherkofel to the steep runs and off-piste skiing of Seegrube. Your Innsbruck Card includes transportation to the ski areas and reduced prices on a number of ski lifts. A variety of combination ski passes are available that give access to lifts at resorts around Innsbruck and throughout Tyrol. For example, the OlympicWorld Ski Pass gives access to nine mountains, with 300 kilometers (186 miles) of trails, including Nordkettenbahn-Seegrube, Patscherkofel, Axamer Lizum, Muttereralp, Kühtai, Rangger Köpfl, Glungezer, Schlick 2000, and Stubai Glacier. The tourist office can give you more information and also sells all necessary tickets.

Die Boerse

SKIING/SNOWBOARDING | You can book all skiing needs, from equipment to lift tickets at this store, tucked into an alley just south of the Triumphpforte. You can also hire instructors and book lessons through the on-site Ski & Snowboard-schule Innsbruck to meet you at your hotel or one of the ski areas, or the school can arrange transportation (at extra cost). It can also arrange days out, with instruction, at farther-flung resorts such as St. Anton, Ischgl, or Sölden. One-on-one tuition starts at €140 for an afternoon, with each additional person €10. ☒ *Leopoldstrasse 4* ☎ 660/21-44-660 🌐 www.dieboerse.at, www.skischule-innsbruck.com.

SWIMMING

Around Innsbruck there are plenty of lakes, but in town you have little choice other than pools, indoors and out.

Freibad Tivoli

SWIMMING | Come here to swim under the sun with a panoramic view of the mountains. ☒ *Purtschellerstrasse 1*
☎ 0512/502-7081 🌐 www.ikb.at/privat/baeder/freibad-tivoli.

Hallenbad Amraser Strasse

SWIMMING | If the weather goes south, try this turn-of-the-20th-century indoor swimming pool with an Art Nouveau look. ☒ *Amraser Strasse 3* ☎ 0676/836-867-056 🌐 www.ikb.at/privat/baeder/hallenbad-sauna-amraser-strasse.

Hallenbad Höttinger Au

SWIMMING | This is a popular indoor swimming facility, also boasting a counterflow pool and sauna and sunbeds. ☒ *Fürstenweg 12* ☎ 0676/836-867-076 🌐 www.ikb.at/privat/baeder/hallenbad-sauna-hoettinger-au.

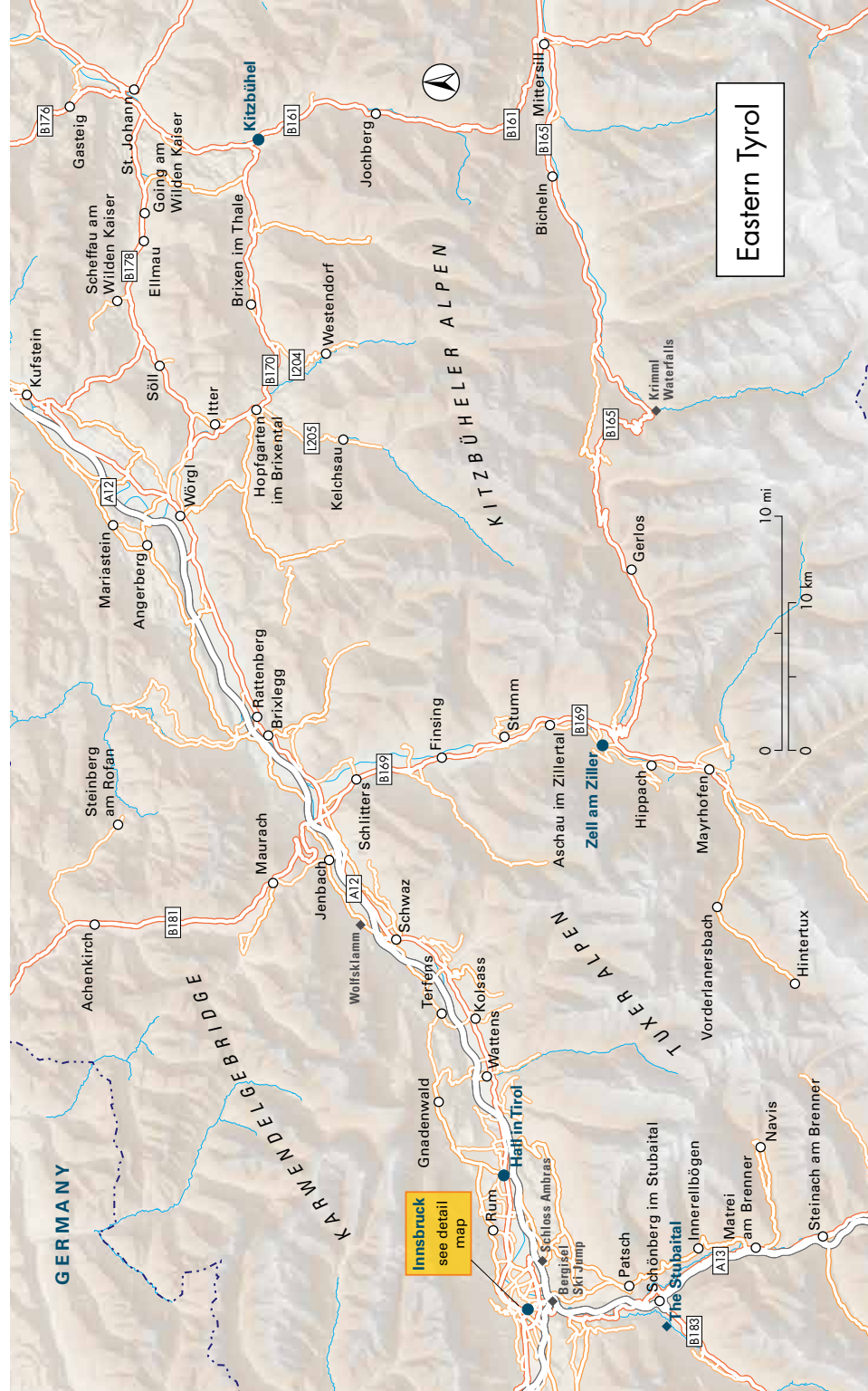
Hall in Tirol

9 km (7 miles) east of Innsbruck, 18 km (5½ miles) northeast of the Stubaital Valley.

A few minutes by road east of Innsbruck is what many say is the most beautiful town in Tyrol—ancient Hall, wonderfully preserved and with a historic center actually larger than that of Innsbruck. The town has a history of great prosperity—salt mining in the Middle Ages made it the most important commercial hub in the region at the time (the High German word *Hal* means salt mine). The town received its municipal charter in 1286, but even greater prestige was to come nearly 200 years later when the provincial mint was moved to the town.

GETTING HERE AND AROUND

From Innsbruck, take Highway A12 east. There is frequent bus service between Innsbruck and Hall on Route 4 (every 15 minutes), with a journey time of about 20 minutes. The Postbus system has frequent services linking Hall with the



rest of Tyrol and beyond. Hall is also on the rail network.

VISITOR INFORMATION

CONTACTS **Hall in Tirol.** ☒ *Unterer Stadtplatz 19, Hall in Tirol* ☎ 05223/45544
 🌐 www.hall-wattens.at.

Sights

Burg Hasegg and Hall Mint

MUSEUM | Built to protect the salt mines and trade on the River Inn, Burg Hasegg was enlarged into a showpiece castle by Duke Siegmund and Emperor Maximilian I. Meanwhile, the first silver coin in Tyrol, the thaler—say it quickly and you'll realize it was the root of the modern word, dollar—emerged from the Münze (mint) in the center of Hall. In 1567, Ferdinand II moved the mint to Burg Hasegg, and thereafter the fortunes of the mint and the castle became intertwined. In the 18th century, 17 million Maria Theresa thaler were minted here and became a valued currency throughout the world. Today, you can visit the mint museum where you can even mint your own coin, as well as climb to the top of the Mint Tower for splendid views. ☒ *Burg Hasegg 6, Hall in Tirol* ☎ 05223/5855–520
 🌐 www.muenze-hall.at 🎫 €11 (inc. tower) ☺ Closed Mon. all year; closed Sun. in Nov.–Mar., closed except groups mid-Jan.–mid-Mar.

Damenstift (Herz-Jesu-Basilika)

RELIGIOUS SITE | Archduchess Magdalena, sister of Ferdinand II, founded the Damenstift Abbey, home of the silent order of Carmelite nuns, in 1567–69. While the abbey was abolished in 1783, the order survived, and today the remaining (mostly elderly) nuns can be found praying in the Collegiate Church (Herz-Jesu-Basilika) at the top of Eugenstrasse. A tiny plaque on the dramatic church facade—an example of the transition from the Renaissance to

the Baroque style—confirms its links to the historic Damenstift. Sit quietly at the back of the church and witness the silent and extensive devotions of the nuns amidst the glorious interior of wood, marble, and gold. ☒ *Jesuitenkirche, Eugenstrasse 14, Hall in Tirol* 🆓 Free.

Pfarrkirche St. Nikolaus

RELIGIOUS SITE | Hall in Tirol's most prominent building is this large, 13th-century Catholic church, boasting a dramatic interior of pinks, golds, and blacks with grand ceiling frescos. The undoubted highlight is the Waldaufkapelle, home to Florian Waldauf's rather gruesome collection of 45 skulls, said to be those of B-list saints. Waldauf, something of a fixer for Emperor Maximilian I at the beginning of the 16th century, began scouring Europe for relics to purchase, and eventually opened his prized collection to the public. Now, the skulls rest on individual embroidered cushions and are, rather oddly, topped with decorative headdresses. ☒ *Pfarrplatz 1, Hall in Tirol* ☎ 05223/57914
 🌐 www.pfarre-hall.at 🆓 Free.

★ Wolfsklamm

TRAIL | If you're driving from Hall in Tirol to Zell am Ziller, this impressive gorge hike is the perfect stop along the way. Exhilarating and spectacular (but very safe), the climb starts in the village of Stans, follows walkways hewn from the mountainside and across bridges spanning the tumbling river and beside waterfalls—all protected by railings—and finally reaches the Benedictine monastery of St. Georgenberg. The whole thing takes about 90 minutes and features 354 steps. At the top, the monastery's sumptuously decorated Baroque church, precariously perched on a rocky peak, is worth a few minutes of your time. There is a decent restaurant, too, with a terrace dizzily located above a sheer drop of several hundred feet. ☒ *Stans*.

Hotels

Garten Hotel Maria Theresia

\$\$ | **HOTEL** | Built in solid, substantial, flower-bedecked chalet style, this is a family hotel to the core, and the family that runs it is the epitome of true Tyrolean innkeeping and hospitality. **Pros:** very good value; family run and very friendly; excellent food. **Cons:** away from the prettiest district of Hall; bit of a walk to the town center; the bells of a nearby church may disturb some. 📄 *Rooms from: €110* ☒ *Reimmichlstrasse 25, Heiligkreuz, Hall in Tirol* ☎ 05223/56313 🌐 www.gartenhotel.at 🛏 24 rooms 🆓 Free breakfast.

Gasthof Badl

\$\$ | **HOTEL** | **FAMILY** | For a short stay, this gasthof can fit the bill at a budget price, offering a warm welcome and rooms that are sparkling clean, with all the comfort you need for an overnight stay. **Pros:** extremely friendly and family run; excellent value; great views on the river side. **Cons:** close to an autobahn so can be noisy; not in the center of town; friendly dogs roam the grounds. 📄 *Rooms from: €110* ☒ *Haller Innbrücke 4, Ampass, Hall in Tirol* ☎ 05223/56784 🌐 www.badl.at 🛏 25 rooms 🆓 Free breakfast.

Rettenberg Hotel

\$ | **HOTEL** | Close to Hall in Tirol and very handy for Innsbruck, this comfortable hotel remains a place where you can feel part of a small community and actually meet locals in the bar. **Pros:** very reasonable prices; lots of local character; on-site spa with pool and bowling alley. **Cons:** rooms at the front can be noisy; smoking still allowed in the bar; main slopes are a drive or bus ride away. 📄 *Rooms from: €59* ☒ *Mühlbach 6, Kolsass-Weer* ☎ 05224/68124 🌐 www.kolsass.at 🛏 45 rooms 🆓 Free breakfast.

Zell am Ziller

60 km (38 miles) southeast of Innsbruck, 52 km (32 miles) southeast of Hall in Tirol.

Zell is the main town of the Zillertal, one of the many beautiful Alpine valleys of the Tyrol, and a real working community rather than just a resort town. It is notable for its traditional 500-year-old Gauder Fest, and has also developed into a center of summer activities. You can choose to stay in one of a dozen hotels or bed-and-breakfast pensions at surprisingly reasonable cost. Although Zell is considered the valley's main town, the bigger-name resort, especially for skiing, is Mayrhofen, a little farther up the valley and somewhat more expensive. In Zell, families enjoy the Fun-arena, which has water slides and a roller coaster for kids, while adults can try rafting or paragliding.

GETTING HERE AND AROUND

From Innsbruck, take Highway A12 or Route 171 to Wiesing; from here, the B169 will lead you to the Ziller Valley. Kids—and quite a few adults—will love the old steam engine of the Zillertalbahn pulling a few historical cars from Jenbach train station up the Zillertal to Zell, and then on to Mayrhofen, twice a day.

Sights

★ Gauder Fest

FESTIVAL | The more than 500-year-old Gauder Fest, held on the first weekend in May, is Austria's biggest folk festival. Thousands of visitors, many of them in traditional costume from Tyrol and other parts of Austria, pack the little market town of Zell am Ziller for the colorful skits, music, and singing—and great quantities of *Gauderbier*, a strong brew created for the occasion. You can hear some of the country's best singing by the valley residents and listen to expert harp and zither playing, for which the valley is famous. Tradition runs strong here, so even if you can't make it in May, there are

other festival opportunities: witness the Perchtenlaufen, processions of colorfully masked well-wishers going the neighborhood rounds on January 5; or come for the annual Almbtrieb on the last September and first October days, when the cows (decorated with wreaths and bells) are herded back from the high Alpine pastures into the lower fields and barns. ☒ *Zell am Ziller* 🌐 www.gauderfest.at.

Krimml Waterfalls

BODY OF WATER | The tiered Krimml falls plunge down in three stages, with a total drop of 1,247 feet, making it the highest waterfall in Austria and one of Austria's most popular natural attractions. A path ascends through the woods beside the falls, with frequent viewing points. By car or bus, it's 35 minutes from Zell am Ziller over the Gerlos Pass. ☒ *Krimml* ☎ 06564/7212 🌐 www.wasserfaelle-krimml.at 📄 €10 (includes water park); €4 to just walk the path beside the waterfall ☺ Closed Nov.–mid-Apr.

🍷 Restaurants

Hotel Gasthof Bräu

\$\$\$ | **AUSTRIAN** | **FAMILY** | The core of this frescoed building in the town center dates from the 16th century, but subsequent renovations have brought the five-story structure up to date. The three-room restaurant offers a menu with an emphasis on fish and game, and many ingredients come directly from the owner's own farm and fish ponds or from other local suppliers. Go for the trout, and make sure to taste the house beer from the on-site brewery, also the source of a special made-for-the-festival brew, Zillertel Gauderbier. The "Bräu" also has some nice rooms to stay the night; book early if you want to reserve a room during the Gauder Fest. **Known for:** beautifully decorated wood-paneled parlors; locally grown produce; beer from nearby family brewery. 📄 *Average main:* €17 ☒ *Dorfplatz 1* ☎ 05282/2313 🌐 www.hotel-braeu.at ☺ Closed Apr. and mid-Oct.–mid-Dec.

🚶 Activities

ZIP-LINING

Arena Skyliner

ZIP LINING | **FAMILY** | A development of the Flying Fox zip-line concept, the Skyliner has four lines where you can hurtle along at 50 kph (31 mph) and get a bird's-eye view of the area (on Line 3 you are more than 200 feet above the ground). The meeting point is at the top station of the Gerlosstein cable car. Minimum and maximum weight restrictions apply—40 kilos (88 pounds) and 120 kilos (265 pounds), respectively. ☒ *Dorfplatz 3a* ☎ 0664/44–19–283 🌐 www.zillertalarena.com/en/arena/sommer/arena-skyliner.html 📄 €42.30.

Kitzbühel

92 km (57 miles) east of Innsbruck, 78 km (49 miles) northeast of Zell am Ziller.

Kitzbühel is indisputably one of Austria's most fashionable winter resorts, although the town boasts a busy summer season as well. "Kitz" offers warm-season visitors a hefty program of hiking, cycling, golf, and lake swimming (at nearby Schwarzsee), along with outdoor concerts and plays. It also hosts the annual Austrian Open tennis tournament in July. In winter, many skiers are attracted by the famous Ski Safari—a carefully planned, clever combination of chairlifts, gondola lifts, draglifts, and runs that lets you ski for more than 145 km (91 miles) without having to walk a single foot. Kitzbühel is in perpetual motion and is busy December through mid-April, notably at the end of January for the famed **Hahnenkamm World Cup** downhill ski race. At any time during the season there's plenty to do, from sleigh rides to fancy-dress balls. And with parts of the town dating back to the 14th century, Kitzbühel is a scenic place to stay year-round. ■ **TIP→ In summer, visitors are offered free guest cards, which provide free access or substantially**

reduced fees for various activities, such as tennis, riding, and golf.

GETTING HERE AND AROUND

From Innsbruck, take the autobahn A12 or B171 west to the town of Wörgl, then the B170 to Kitzbühel. From here you can travel south on the B161/B108 to Matrei in Osttirol and to Lienz.

VISITOR INFORMATION

CONTACTS *Kitzbühel Tourismus*. ☒ *Hinterstadt 18* ☎ 05356/66660 🌐 www.kitzbuehel.com/en.

👁 Sights

Alpine Flower Garden Kitzbühel

GARDEN | Take the cable car up the Kitzbüheler Horn to this lovely garden at 6,500 feet. Amid glorious mountain scenery you will see hundreds of varieties of Alpine flowers in their native habitat, including varieties from other parts of the world. Guided tours are offered daily at 11 am from June to early September. ☒ *Kitzbühel* ☎ 05356/6951 🌐 www.kitzbuehel.com/en 📄 Free; cable car: one way €22, round-trip €27.50.

Church of St. Catherine (Katharinenkirche)

RELIGIOUS SITE | Built around 1350, this historic church houses a Gothic winged altar dating from 1515. Kitzbühel is also blessed with several other beautiful churches, including St. Andrew's (1435–1506) with its lavish Rococo chapel, and Christuskirche (1962) with its striking white bell tower. ☒ *Kitzbühel*.

🍷 Restaurants

★ Hallerwirt

\$\$\$ | **AUSTRIAN** | In the small village of Aurach about 5 km (3 miles) south of Kitzbühel, Hallerwirt is known for its great Austrian cuisine and charm. Old wooden floors and a ceramic stove in the parlor lend a period flair to this 400-year-old farmhouse. A colorful mix of people gathers here, and young and old enjoy the easygoing vibe. The congenial hosts,

Monika and Jürgen Stelzhammer, take time to give everyone some good wine suggestions. The friendly staff serves specialties such as Jerusalem artichoke soup and fillet of lamb. **Known for:** warm welcome from the owners; charming surroundings; use of local produce. 📄 *Average main:* €18 ☒ *Oberaurach 4, Aurach bei Kitzbühel* ☎ 05356/64502 🌐 www.hallerwirt.at ☺ Closed Mon.–Tue. and mid-Nov.–early Dec.

Praxmair

\$ | **CAFÉ** | Après-ski can't begin early enough for the casually chic crowds that pile into this famous café and pastry shop in the heart of Kitzbühel. For locals, the Praxmair is a meeting point for regular get-togethers, cabaret performances, and small events. The wood interior and a tiled stove give the place a special flair. **Known for:** bustling atmosphere; live après-ski music; tasty krapfen (jelly doughnuts). 📄 *Average main:* €10 ☒ *Vorderstadt 17* ☎ 05356/62646 🌐 No credit cards ☺ Closed Apr. and Nov.

★ Tennerhof Gourmet

\$\$\$\$ | **AUSTRIAN** | Expect elegant dress and quiet conversations at this high-class restaurant, where Johannes Denk and his creative team have been awarded 17 Gault Millau points and previously held a Michelin star. Freshly picked herbs from the garden accompany almost every dish, from soup to sorbet, and imaginative dishes might include rainbow trout paired with a pig's trotter. Local game is a passion, and food and wine are presented by well-trained, white-gloved staff in one of the four cozy parlors that make up the *Kupferstube*. Menus range from four courses (€120) to seven courses (€185). **Known for:** cozy Tyrolean atmosphere; local produce from the on-site garden; great wine menu. 📄 *Average main:* €120 ☒ *Tennerhof Hotel, Griesenauweg 26* ☎ 05356/63181 🌐 www.tennerhof.com ☺ Closed Mon.–Tue.; closed Apr.–May and Oct.–mid-Dec.

Hotels

★ Rasmushof

\$\$\$ | **HOTEL** | It's hard to imagine a better choice for a Kitzbühel stay than this superluxurious but relaxed former farmstead, with unrivaled year-round proximity to outdoor activities. **Pros:** fabulous location; breathtaking views; ski-in ski-out in winter. **Cons:** pretty pricey for the area; away from the town center; service in bar can be curt. **Rooms** from: €255 **Hermann Reisch Weg 15** ☎ 05356/652520 www.rasmushof.at ➡ 60 rooms **Free breakfast.**

★ Tennerhof

\$\$\$\$ | **HOTEL** | Adored by the rich and famous, from the Duke of Windsor to Kirk Douglas, this Alpine Shangri-la is at once rustic and glamorous, with gold chandeliers hung over country cupboards and silk-covered sofas next to shuttered windows. **Pros:** grand aristocratic flair; great breakfast; lovely garden. **Cons:** a little way from the town center and ski lifts; can be too fancy for some; very expensive. **Rooms** from: €340 **Griesenauweg 26** ☎ 05356/63181 www.tennerhof.com ☺ Closed Apr.–May and Oct.–mid-Dec. ➡ 39 rooms **Free breakfast.**

★ Villa Licht

\$\$\$ | **B&B/INN** | This adorable Hansel-and-Gretel chalet is home to eight self-catering apartments where hospitality and attention to detail are paramount. **Pros:** a short walk from town center; very quiet; lots of free parking. **Cons:** no restaurant (though plenty nearby); minimum five-night stays in high season; need to book well in advance. **Rooms** from: €230 **Franz Reisch Strasse 8** ☎ 05356/62293 www.villa-licht.at ➡ 8 apartments **Free breakfast.**

Nightlife

Fünferl

BARS/PUBS | Located in the center of town, this place is full of character and has many dedicated fans. It's good for late-evening cocktails and attracts a somewhat more mature and relaxed clientele who prefer conversation to partying. **Franz-Reisch-Strasse 1** ☎ www.club-takefive.com/fuenferl ☺ Closed Sun.–Tues.

Kitzbühel Casino

CASINOS | Few casinos can be located in such a charming and historic building as this, in the center of town. It offers baccarat, blackjack, roulette, and one-armed bandits. There's a restaurant and bar, and it's open late (usually until 3 am). A valid passport or driver's license is needed to enter. **Hinterstadt 24** ☎ 05356/62300 www.casinos.at/en/kitzbuehel.

The Londoner

BARS/PUBS | Young people flock to this popular watering hole, one of the biggest-name bars in town. It gets packed by fans and racers alike on big ski-race days, and can be just too crammed to get in. **Franz-Reisch-Strasse 4** ☎ 05356/71427 www.thelondoner.at.

Take Five

DANCE CLUBS | The dance-club crowd moves from place to place, but check out this hot spot in the center of Kitz. It has three bars and a spacious VIP area, and aims for a sophisticated atmosphere. **Hinterstadt 22** ☎ 0664/308-1634 www.club-takefive.com.

Activities

GOLF

With four courses on its doorstep and a dozen more within an hour's drive, Kitzbühel may properly lay claim to being the golf center of the Alps. The Golf Alpin Card (www.golf-alpin.at) offers special deals, including five green fees for €360 or three for €225; it's available

at several Kitzbühel hotels and golf clubs, or from the tourist office.

Golf Eichenheim

GOLF | Heady views of soaring Alpine peaks surrounding the course are mixed with leafy fringed fairways to give this 18-hole PGA-rated venue a unique appeal. The name, meaning "Oak Home," reflects the surroundings, and a round includes the opportunity to appreciate rare flora and fauna. If you work up an appetite, the clubhouse includes a gourmet restaurant. **Eichenheim 8** ☎ 05356/66615-560 www.eichenheim.com ☞ Apr.–Jun. and Oct.–Nov. €80; Jul.–Sep. €99; 9 holes €40–€50 **18 holes, 6662 yards, par 71.**

Golfclub Kitzbühel

GOLF | This pretty nine-hole course winds between ancient trees and water hazards with a fabulous backdrop of Alpine grandeur. The slightly hilly terrain is set around the Grand Spa Resort A-Rosa, and resort guests receive a discount. There are plenty of water hazards, with two of the greens located on islands. The course, built in 1955, is open from May to October and has a handicap limit of 36. **Ried Caps 3** ☎ 05356/63007 www.golfclub-kitzbuehel.at ☞ €94 for 18 holes, €56 for 9 holes **9 holes, 5629 yards, par 70.**

Golf-Club Kitzbühel-Schwarzsee-Reith

GOLF | Amazing views to the Wilder Kaiser mountain range and the Kitzbüheler Horn peak nearby help to make this 18-hole course a treat for the senses. The par-72 course is varied, with wide fairways. A big surprise is sprung at the par-three 16th hole—called the Mousetrap—which is played over a small ravine. The course is open from May to October (in winter it's used by cross-country skiers), and holders of the Kitzbühel Guest Card get a 20% green fee discount. **Golfweg-Schwarzsee 35** ☎ 05356/66660-70 www.kitzbuehel.com/golf-schwarzsee ☞ May–Jun. and Oct., €87 for 18 holes, €50 for 9 holes; Jul.–Sep., €95 for 18 holes, €57 for 9 holes **18 holes, 6675 yards, par 72.**

Rasmushof Golf Club

GOLF | This May-through-October golf course is also the location of the final slope of the famous Streif run of the fearsome Hahnenkamm World Cup downhill race. Part of the Rasmushof Hotel, it's also the course closest to the town center. The greens and fairways are in full view of the glorious old building's balconies, and hotel guests receive significantly discounted rates. **Hermann-Reisch-Weg 15** ☎ 05356/65252 www.rasmushof.at ☞ €28 for 9 holes on weekdays, €34 on weekends; €38 for 18 holes on weekdays, €44 on weekends. Hotel guests: €19 per day for unlimited play **9 holes, 3060 yards, par 54.**

SKIING

Kitzbühel is one of Austria's leading resorts and home to the Hahnenkamm World Cup Downhill, one of the most daunting events on the ski-racing calendar. There are many easy slopes, too, and the ski network here is vast and spectacular, with 60 lovely mountain huts scattered over the slopes offering excellent food and drink to break the ski day. There are 192 km (119 miles) of slopes—106 of them blue, 66 red and 20 black—all served by 57 ski lifts throughout winter and spring (often until early May). Intersport Kitzsport has a number of shops in town with the latest equipment for rent, as does Sport 2000. There are a dozen ski schools with hundreds of instructors at peak times. The tourist office website has full information.

The Stubaital

11 km (7 miles) southwest of Innsbruck (Schönberg im Stubaital).

The delightful Stubaital is one of the most beautiful valleys in the Tyrol. Though less than 40 kilometers (25 miles) long, it has no fewer than 80 glistening glaciers (including the Stubai Glacier) and more than 40 towering peaks. The gondola lift up to the glacier is spectacular, and you

can venture onto the glacier on marked walks. The higher slopes are open for skiing most of the summer, too. If you just want to look, you can see the whole Stubaital in a full day's excursion from Innsbruck.

GETTING HERE AND AROUND

The narrow-gauge electric Stubaitalbahn can take you from the center of Innsbruck (on Maria-Theresien-Strasse and in front of the main train station), as well as from the station just below the Bergisel ski jump, as far as Fulpmes, partway up the valley. You can take the bus as far as Ranalt and back to Fulpmes, to see more of the valley, then return on the quaint rail line.



Sights

★ Stubai Glacier

MOUNTAIN—SIGHT | At the southwesterly end of the valley lies Austria's biggest glacier. It's also one of the country's most popular ski resorts, with miles upon miles of snow-covered slopes open all year round, even in the height of summer. For warm-weather visitors who prefer hiking boots to ski boots, there's an extensive network of trails throughout the area. ☒ *Mutterberg 2, Innsbruck* ☎ 05226/8141 🌐 www.stubaier-gletscher.com/en.

Sölden

84 km (52 miles) southwest of Innsbruck, 176 km (109 miles) southwest of Kitzbühel.

Sölden is a skier's paradise, home to the only lift system in Austria to boast skiing on three mountains more than 9,800 feet high. Its latest addition is the "Black Blade," which carries eight at a time up to the sky-high Rettenbach glacier, where panoramic mountain views await. Sölden's reputation as a wild, après-ski party town is well deserved, so if you are

searching for a tranquil, romantic ski holiday, or have small children, you may want to try the quieter village of **Hochsölden** on the slopes above town instead.

GETTING HERE AND AROUND

From Innsbruck take the A12 west. Then take the B186 south to the Ötztal; after about 37 km (23 miles) you will reach the town of Sölden.

Leaving Sölden you can backtrack on the B168 north to the A12, or if you feel like some real hairpin Alpine driving, go south into Italy over the Timmelsjoch Pass.

VISITOR INFORMATION

CONTACTS Ötztal Tourismus. ☒ *Gemeindestrasse 4* ☎ 0572/00-200 🌐 www.soelden.com.



Hotels

Aqua Dome Hotel and Spa

\$\$\$\$ | **HOTEL** | In the midst of breathtaking nature 15 minutes north of Sölden lies not only the finest spa in Tyrol, but also elegant guest rooms with balconies and stunning mountain views. **Pros:** incredible spa; great food; free nonalcoholic drinks in the minibar. **Cons:** spa busy on weekends; too sprawling for some; some distance from the ski slopes. ☎ *Rooms from: €408* ☒ *Oberlängenfeld 140, Längenfeld* ☎ 05253/6400 🌐 www.aqua-dome.at ➔ 200 rooms 🌞 No meals.

Das Central

\$\$\$\$ | **HOTEL** | Huge arches and heavy wood beams set the mood at this five-star hotel that's substantial both in size and character, and has superb spa and fitness amenities. **Pros:** wonderful personal service; on-demand shuttle to the slopes; fabulous spa. **Cons:** slopes are not within walking distance; not all rooms have great views; church bells can be an early wake-up call. ☎ *Rooms from: €400* ☒ *Auweg 3* ☎ 05254/2260-0 🌐 www.central-soelden.at ➔ 125 rooms 🌞 Free breakfast.



Hikers, bikers, photographers, and nature-lovers are all drawn to the Stubaital and its epic beauty in summer.

Hotel Ritzlerhof

\$\$\$ | **HOTEL** | Spectacularly located in the village of Sautens, on a shelf in the hillside high above the Ötz Valley, the Ritzlerhof is single-mindedly purposed toward meditative levels of peace and relaxation. **Pros:** idyllic location; heated indoor and outdoor pools; lots of peace and quiet. **Cons:** a long way from ski lifts; evening meals are mediocre; too remote for some. ☎ *Rooms from: €270* ☒ *Ritzlerhof 1, Sautens* ☎ 05252/62680 🌐 www.ritzlerhof.at/en ➔ 45 rooms 🌞 Free breakfast.

Liebe Sonne

\$\$\$ | **HOTEL** | Skiers will be right next to the Giggijoch chairlift to Hochsölden at this sprawling yellow complex; the famous lift is also open all summer to give hikers and mountain bikers a flying start to their day. **Pros:** spacious rooms; close to the ski slopes; on-site stables for horseback riding. **Cons:** gets extremely busy in winter; can hear après-ski revellers until late; lacking in Tyrolean tradition and decor. ☎ *Rooms from: €280* ☒ *Dorfstrasse 58* ☎ 05254/2203 🌐 www.liebesonne.at

liebesonne.at ➔ 60 rooms 🌞 Free breakfast.

★ Naturhotel Waldklaus

\$\$\$\$ | **HOTEL** | It's hard to tell where this hotel ends and the countryside begins—floors are natural stone, rooms smell of applewood paneling, and some exterior walls are built around trees. **Pros:** environmentally friendly; guests can use the nearby Aqua Dome spa for free; beautiful natural environment. **Cons:** not close to the mountain lifts; some rooms lack mountain views; a little sterile and impersonal for some. ☎ *Rooms from: €350* ☒ *Unterlängenfeld 190, Längenfeld* ☎ 05253/5455 🌐 www.waldklaus.at ➔ 55 rooms 🌞 Free breakfast.



Nightlife

The nightlife here varies from wild to nonexistent, depending on the season. In winter there are more than 85 bars, discos, and pubs—and they're all packed. Many nightspots have live bands, but expect cover charges of around €5. In



You may recognize the world famous winter destination Sölden as the stunning backdrop to James Bond's *Spectre*.

summer there are far fewer options, though most Sölden hotels have on-site bars and restaurants.

Fire & Ice

BARS/PUBS | In this very popular bar, the partying lasts from 3 pm to 3 am, thanks to the great dance floor. ☒ Dorfstrasse 3 ☎ 05254/2203 🌐 www.apresskisoelden.at.

Activities

CLIMBING

Wildspitze

CLIMBING/MOUNTAINEERING | The Ventertal valley burrows far into the Ötztal Alps, ending in the tiny village of Vent, a popular resort center. In summer the village is transformed into a base for serious mountain climbers experienced in ice and rock climbing, who want to attempt the formidable Wildspitze (12,370 feet) or other, even more difficult neighboring peaks. Hiring a professional local guide is strongly advised. To reach Vent from Sölden, turn off at the road at

Zwieselstein that's marked to Heiligenkreuz. ☒ Vent.

RAFTING

Skischule Vacancia

WHITE-WATER RAFTING | As the name suggests, Vacancia is a ski school and rental shop in winter. But in the warmer months it's the best place in town to get everything you need to enjoy the area's wild waters. It even offers guided rafting trips. You can also come here to arrange other outdoors activities including canyoning, glacier walks, and special outdoor adventures for kids. ☒ Dorfstrasse 70 ☎ 05254/3100 🌐 www.vacancia.at.

SKIING

Sölden is one of Austria's top skiing and snowboarding areas, with great snow and a long season thanks to its high-altitude slopes and two skiable glaciers. There are 150 km (93 miles) of slopes, with the top station at 10,660 feet, served by 33 lifts. The tourist office website has full information on ski instruction and equipment rental.

St. Anton am Arlberg

100 km (62 miles) west of Innsbruck, 88 km (55 miles) northwest of Sölden.

St. Anton is known as a cult destination for good skiers and boarders from around the world because of its extensive slopes full of character and challenges, and its huge amount of off-piste opportunities. But it's also a high-profile destination and attracts the wealthy, the prominent, and, occasionally, the royal. Therefore, accommodations are not cheap, but there is a wide range of options, and if you shop around you can find somewhere to stay, particularly outside the center of the action, at a bearable price.

Thanks to an amazing system of cable cars, gondolabahns, chairlifts, and T-bars, St. Anton grants skiers access to the Arlberg region's more than 300 km (186 miles) of marked runs. If you decide to take to the slopes, remember that skiing remains a serious business in St. Anton; this is a resort where skiers come in search of the steep and the deep, so choose your itinerary with care. Be aware of the different trail classifications in Europe—easy runs are marked blue on the trail map, medium is red, and difficult is black—but in places such as St. Anton, a blue might be a red elsewhere and a red might easily be a black.

St. Anton is also a particularly lovely town in summer, where visitors can enjoy hiking, mountain biking, rock-climbing, or simply soaking up the mountain views. Book a stay anywhere in town between July and mid-October and you'll get a free St. Anton Summer Card, which includes access to all cable cars, e-bike rental, a round of golf, and a whole host of other benefits.

GETTING HERE AND AROUND

If you come from Innsbruck in the east, you either take Autobahn A12, which turns into the S16, or the quieter B171. From Bregenz in the west, travel south

on Autobahn A14, which at the city of Bludenz becomes the S16. Then, near the village of Klösterle, you can decide whether to continue straight on through the 14-km (8½-mile) Arlberg tunnel, or travel over the pass on the B197 1½ km (one mile) to St. Anton. If you're not in a hurry, go over the pass every time; this is high Alpine country and the surrounding views are fabulous.

VISTOR INFORMATION

CONTACTS St. Anton am Arlberg. ☒ Dorfstrasse 8 ☎ 05446/2269-0 🌐 www.stantonamarlberg.com.



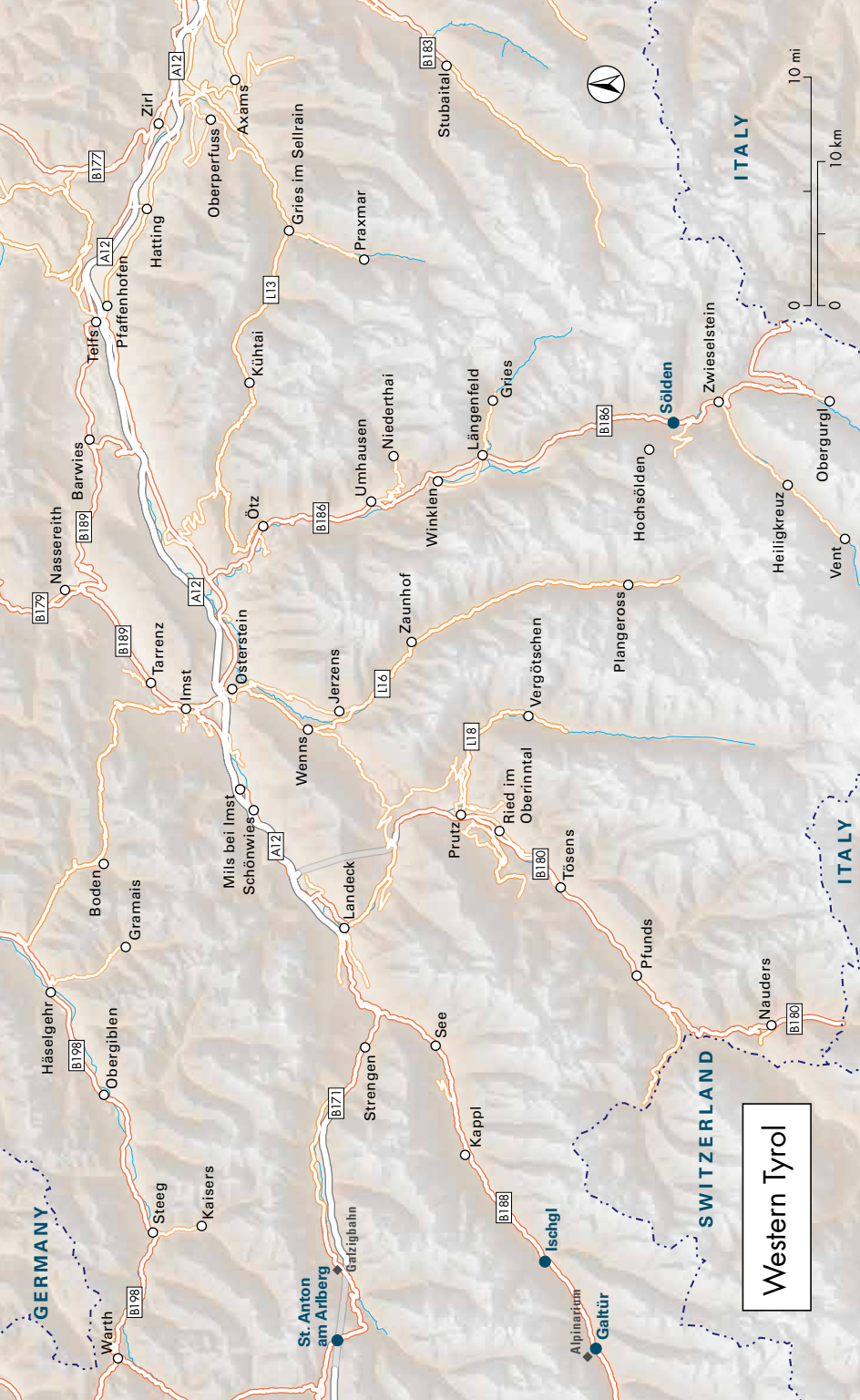
★ Galzigbahn

MOUNTAIN—SIGHT | The state-of-the-art Galzigbahn cable car rises from the heart of St. Anton up to the Galzig mountain, where it connects with the two-part Vallugabahn and climbs even higher, crossing from the province of Tyrol into neighboring Vorarlberg. As well as offering spectacular mountain vistas all along the way—the panoramic mountain views from the platform at 9,222 feet are simply breathtaking—there's also a great selection of hiking and biking trails, as well as restaurants and refreshment huts along the way. It's open in the summer from July through early September, and in winter as part of the St. Anton ski resort. ☒ Kandaharweg 9 ☎ 05446/23520 🌐 www.arlbergerbahnen.com.



Anton Aparthotel

\$\$\$ | **HOTEL** | If you're not looking for a quaint Tyrolean hotel, this wood-and-glass house—modern, casual, and almost Zen-like in its simplicity—could be the answer, thanks to its location in front of the slopes and steps from the main ski lifts. **Pros:** refreshing contemporary architecture; hip vibe; central location. **Cons:** not for devotees of the traditional; draws a party crowd and accompanying



noise; need to book far in advance.

📍 **Rooms from:** €260 ☎ *Kandaharweg 4* ☎ 05446/2408 🌐 www.hotelanton.at 🚗 14 rooms, 3 apartments 🍳 Free breakfast.

Raffl's St. Antonerhof

\$\$\$\$ | **HOTEL** | The Raffl family has created a distinctive and memorable hotel filled with antiques and art of all kinds. **Pros:** great location for skiers; fabulous cuisine; supreme luxury. **Cons:** closed in summer; very expensive; early booking is essential. 📍 **Rooms from:** €680 ☎ *Arlbergstrasse 69* ☎ 05446/29100 🌐 www.antonerhof.at 🕒 Closed Apr.–mid-Dec. 🚗 36 rooms 🍳 Free breakfast.

★ Schwarzer Adler

\$\$\$\$ | **HOTEL** | The beautifully frescoed facade of this ancient inn, which has been offering hospitality for nearly 450 years, hints at what you'll find inside: open fireplaces, Tyrolean antiques, and colorful Oriental carpets. **Pros:** gorgeous skypool with panoramic views; best bar in St. Anton; lovely building. **Cons:** the pool area can get very busy; no mini-bar or hot drinks in rooms; not cheap. 📍 **Rooms from:** €400 ☎ *Dorfstrasse 35* ☎ 05446/22440 🌐 www.schwarzeradler.com 🕒 Closed mid-Apr.–May and mid-Sep.–Nov. 🚗 77 rooms 🍷 No meals.

🍷 Nightlife

For some visitors to St. Anton the snow, not the snow, is the thing. The vast majority of the bars are in the pedestrian zone, though some of the most famous are up on the slopes.

Horny B

BARS/PUBS | Yes, it's a terrible name. But it's also one of the area's best nightclubs, with live music and guest DJs. The popular après-ski spot opens at 9 pm and closes between 3 and 4 am. ☎ *Dorfstrasse 50* 🌐 www.hornyb.com.

Krazy Kanguruh

DANCE CLUBS | A favorite après-ski gathering spot, the Krazy Kanguruh is located right on the slopes: that means you'll have to ski down to get back to town, which could be tricky after a few drinks. Skiers have been partying here since 1965, and a trip to St. Anton is not complete without at least one visit here. ☎ *Mooserweg 19* ☎ 05446/2633 🌐 www.krazykanguruh.com.

Mooserwirt

BARS/PUBS | Raucous, mind-boggling, and legendary, the Mooserwirt, on the piste side above St. Anton, has carved a reputation as one of skiing's most famous—or notorious—nightlife spots. By all accounts, owner Eugen Scalet decided to “kill the cows and milk the tourists” by turning his parents' farmhouse into one of the world's rowdiest après-ski bars. It's said to sell the second-largest amount of beer annually of any bar in Austria. It has a boutique (soundproofed) hotel next door—the ultimate ski-in, ski-out destination. ☎ *Unterer Mooserweg 2* ☎ 05446/3588 🌐 www.mooserwirt.at.

Murmel Bar

BARS/PUBS | This popular live-music bar in the heart of St. Anton opens early and closes late, making it equally appealing for a post-slopes beer or a big night out. Try to catch a set from regular Gunar Franzoi, whose sublime guitar shredding has patrons dancing on the tables. ☎ *Dorfstrasse 64* ☎ 05446/2300 🌐 www.murmel.at.

🏂 Activities

SKIING

The *Skihaserl*, or ski bunny, as the beginner is called, usually joins a class on St. Anton's nursery slopes, where he or she will have plenty of often-distinguished company. Once past the Skihaserl stage, skiers go higher in the Arlberg mountains to the superlative runs at Galzig and the 9,100-foot Valluga above it. Check with

your hotel or the ski-pass desks at the base of the Galzigbahn gondola about an **Arlberg Skipass**, which is good on cable cars and lifts in St. Anton and St. Christoph on the Tyrol side and on those in Zürs, Lech, Oberlech, and Stuben in Vorarlberg (as well as the resorts of Warth and Schrecken, to which Lech is now linked via a gondolabahn). For complete details on St. Anton's skiing facilities, contact the town's tourist office.

Skischule Arlberg

SKIING/SNOWBOARDING | This is considered by some to be the Harvard of ski schools and its location is certainly fitting, since Arlberg is known as the cradle of skiing. The world's first properly organized ski school was opened here by ski pioneer Hannes Schneider. ☎ *St. Christoph 8* ☎ 05446/2151 🌐 www.skischool-arlberg.com.

Ischgl and Galtür

105 km (65 miles) southwest of Innsbruck, 43 km (27 miles) south of St. Anton am Arlberg.

Ischgl, the best-known resort in the Paznaun Valley, has become as renowned for its party scene as for its excellent skiing—it links with the Swiss resort of Samnaun and has a wealth of high-altitude runs. In summer it's a popular health resort, with activities including hiking, climbing, and mountain biking. There are many high-profile events here, both in summer and winter, including big-name rock concerts, mountain biking, and culinary events, and one of Europe's leading snow sculpture (as opposed to ice sculpture) competitions.

Slightly higher up the valley is **Galtür**, equally popular as a winter-sports area, summer resort, and a base for mountain climbing. Although Galtür is a starting point for practiced mountaineers, many of the climbs up the Blue Silvretta are easy and lead to the half-dozen mountain

huts belonging to the Alpenverein. Galtür and the Silvretta region inspired Ernest Hemingway's novella *Alpine Idyll*; the author spent the winter of 1925 here, and the town still remembers him fondly.

You can get to Idalp, at 7,500-feet, via the four-kilometer-long (2½-mile-long) Silvretta gondolabahn. The enchanting Paznaun Valley follows the course of the Trisanna River for more than 40 km (25 miles). The valley runs into the heart of the Blue Silvretta mountains, named for the shimmering ice-blue effect created by the great peaks and glaciers, dominated by the Fluchthorn (10,462 feet) at the head of the valley.

GETTING HERE AND AROUND

From Innsbruck, follow the A12 west to Landeck. Just beyond here, take the B188 southwest into the Paznauntal (Paznaun Valley); after about 40 km (25 miles) you'll reach Ischgl, while Galtür is a farther 13 km (eight miles) on the same road. Returning to Innsbruck (or to St. Anton am Arlberg), you can either double back, or, if it's nice weather and you feel like some serious Alpine driving, head to the Silvretta-Hochalpenstrasse (Silvretta High Alpine Road). It takes you on many hairpin curves up to 7,000 feet and then down into the Montafon Valley in Vorarlberg. The cost for driving on the pass is €16.50 per car.

VISITOR INFORMATION

CONTACTS Tourismusverband Paznaun.

☎ *Dorfstrasse 43, Ischgl* ☎ 05444/52660 🌐 www.ischgl.com/en.



Alpinarium

MUSEUM | Following an avalanche of catastrophic proportions on February 23, 1999, which took 31 lives and destroyed many centuries-old homes and guesthouses, the community of Galtür undertook a massive building project. The result? The Alpinarium; a memorial, museum, conference center,

café, indoor climbing hall, library, and, most significantly, a 1,132-foot-long wall built of steel and concrete designed to prevent such an accident from occurring again. On summer Saturdays, 10–4, the *Bauernmarkt* (farmers' market) sets up in front of the Alpinarium, bringing produce, cheese, meat, and specialty products. ☎ *Hauptstrasse 29c, Galtür* ☎ 05443/20000 🌐 www.alpinarium.at 🗄 €9 ☺ *Museum closed Mon.*



Hotels

Hotel Madlein
\$\$\$\$ | **HOTEL** | Quirkiness reigns supreme at this luxurious design hotel, from the minimalist lobby to the Zen-influenced guest rooms (although some retain Tyrolean wood paneling), and the two nightclubs. **Pros:** unique atmosphere; exclusive celebrity vibe; escalator access to ski lift. **Cons:** expensive; lacking in Tyrolean feel; can feel very busy. ☎ *Rooms from: €440* ☎ *Madleinweg 2, Ischgl* ☎ 05444/5226 🌐 www.madlein.com 🗄 79 rooms 🌙 *No meals.*

Hotel Rössle

\$\$\$ | **HOTEL** | The oldest guesthouse in Galtür (as shown by a tax return record from 1600), the centrally located Rössle hotel overflows with Tyrolean charm. **Pros:** plenty of atmosphere; top-notch dining; quiet village surroundings. **Cons:** the lifts are a short ski-bus ride away; no nightlife nearby; church bells can be intrusive. ☎ *Rooms from: €250* ☎ *Galtür 47, Galtür* ☎ 05443/8232 🌐 roessle-galtuer.at/hotel-roessle 🗄 40 rooms 🌙 *Free breakfast.*

Post Ischgl

\$\$\$\$ | **HOTEL** | In the middle of the town's pedestrian area, an imposing facade fronts this 200-year-old haven of luxury, with attractive rooms and a highly rated restaurant serving international and local cuisine. **Pros:** close to shops, bars, and restaurants; a luxurious atmosphere; excellent food and cocktails. **Cons:** noisy

in ski season; minimum one-week bookings in winter; smoking still seems to be tolerated in the bar. ☎ *Rooms from: €370* ☎ *Dorfstrasse 47, Ischgl* ☎ 05444/5232 🌐 www.post-ischgl.com 🗄 83 rooms 🌙 *Free breakfast.*

★ Trofana Royal

\$\$\$\$ | **HOTEL** | This is Ischgl's flagship hotel, elegant and romantic, and the only five-star property in town. **Pros:** great location; large and impressive nightclub; fabulous food. **Cons:** expensive; the popular après-ski bar can get noisy; smoking is common in the lounge. ☎ *Rooms from: €640* ☎ *Dorfstrasse 95, Ischgl* ☎ 05444/600 🌐 www.trofana-royal.at 🗄 111 rooms 🌙 *Free breakfast.*



Nightlife
Ischgl has such a rousing nightlife that during the ski season it would be difficult not to find the après-ski and nightlife action.

Kuhstall

BAR/PUBS | In the center of town, Kuhstall (meaning cowshed) in the winter is a rocking, ultrapopular après-ski bar with a rustic theme. ☎ *Sporthotel Silvretta, Dorfstrasse 74, Ischgl* ☎ 05444/5223 🌐 www.kuhstall.at.

Niki's Stadl

DANCE CLUBS | An Ischgl après-ski institution, this place is traditional, raucous, bizarre, and a must-visit. It regularly provides a mix of Europop and Tyrolean après-ski cheesy oompah-rock. ☎ *Hotel Piz Buin, Dorfstrasse 16, Ischgl* ☎ 05444/5300 🌐 www.nikis-stadl.com.

Trofana Alm

BAR/PUBS | It might feel like an ancient timbered converted barn, but Trofana Alm is actually one of the most successful and slick après-ski bars in the Alps. Open from 3 pm, it switches at 7 pm from dance venue to romantic candlelit restaurant, then at 11 it's back to full-on nightclub and disco. ☎ *Trofana Royal Hotel,*

Dorfstrasse 91, Ischgl ☎ 05444/602
 ☞ www.trofana-alm.at

Zürs

112 km (70 miles) west of Innsbruck, 12 km (7½ miles) northwest of St. Anton am Arlberg.

The chosen resort of the rich and fashionable on this side of the Arlberg, Zürs is little more than a collection of large and seriously plush hotels. Perched at 5,600 feet, it's strictly a winter-sports community; when the season is over, the hotels close. But Zürs is more exclusive than nearby Lech and even more fabulous, in an ultradiscreet fashion, than Gstaad or St. Moritz in Switzerland. Royalty and celebrities don't come here to promote or to be seen. They come to enjoy a hedonistic lifestyle behind the often anodyne facade of their five-star hotel, and to ski on perfectly groomed slopes, anonymous in helmets and sunglasses. Full board is required in most hotels, so there are relatively few "public" restaurants in town and little chance to dine around. But the hotel dining rooms are elegant; in some, jacket and tie are required in the evening. High standards were always part of the history of Zürs—the hotel Zürserhof was built by the aristocratic hotelier Count Tattenbach in the 1920s, and the first ski lift in Austria was constructed here in 1937.

GETTING HERE AND AROUND

From Innsbruck, follow the A12 and S16 to St. Anton am Arlberg. From here, take the B197 toward the Arlberg Pass (do not go into the Arlberg Tunnel) and, shortly after Rauz, follow signs to Zürs/Lech on the B198. The Arlberg Pass is sometimes closed in winter after heavy snowfall, but the road to Zürs/Lech is rarely closed, with sections protected by avalanche balconies.

Champagne on the Slopes

Accessible by the Trittkopf cable car, at the highest point of the Flexen Pass, you'll find the Flexenhäsl (Little Flexen House), a very special little hut that can seat only 20. Here you can order mouthwatering tidbits such as scampi with garlic butter and *Hirschwürstel* (venison sausage) with fresh horseradish sauce, washed down with a bottle of chilled Dom Pérignon. In the evening join in for piping-hot fondue *chinoise*. Reservations are essential (☎ 05583/4143).

VISITOR INFORMATION

CONTACTS Lech-Zürs. ☎ *Lechtal Strasse 76* ☎ 05583/2161–251 ☞ www.lechzuers.com.

Hotels

Edelweiss

\$\$\$\$ | **HOTEL** | Housed in a 19th-century building, the Edelweiss has become a Zürs institution. **Pros:** rooms gorgeously decorated; gourmet restaurant; stylish luxury. **Cons:** can get very lively; room decoration too busy for some; very expensive. ☎ *Rooms from: €430* ☎ *Lechtal Strasse 79* ☎ 05583/2662 ☞ www.edelweiss-arlberg.at ☹ Closed mid-Apr.–Nov. ➔ 63 rooms, 3 apartments ☹ No meals.

Sporthotel Lorünser

\$\$\$\$ | **HOTEL** | The hospitable elegance of this hotel draws royalty, including Princess Caroline of Monaco and Princess (formerly Queen) Beatrix of the Netherlands. **Pros:** discreet elegance; continued top quality; right by the slopes for skiing. **Cons:** closed in summer; extremely expensive; a little over-the-top for some. ☎ *Rooms from: €714* ☎ Zürs

112 ☎ 05583/22540 ☞ www.loruenster.at
 ☹ Closed mid-Apr.–mid-Dec. ➔ 74 rooms
 ☹ All-inclusive.

Zürserhof

\$\$\$\$ | **HOTEL** | When celebrities seek privacy, they ensconce themselves in this world-famous hostelry resembling five huge interlinked chalets, a family-run house that has managed to preserve a certain intimacy. **Pros:** exclusivity and privacy; top luxury fit for a royal; wonderful food. **Cons:** high prices; too formal for some; smoking allowed in one area of the bar. ☎ *Rooms from: €620* ☎ *Zürs 75* ☎ 05583/2513–0 ☞ www.zuerserhof.at ☹ Closed mid-Apr.–Nov. ➔ 104 rooms ☹ Free breakfast.

Activities

SKIING

There are four main lifts out of the village: take the chairlift to Hexenboden (7,600 feet) or the cable car to Trittkopf (7,800 feet), with a restaurant and sun terrace; two chairlifts head up to Seekopf (7,000 feet) and the Zürzersee, where there is another restaurant. This mountain often gets huge snowfalls.

■ **TIP→ Skiers need to be particularly aware of avalanche conditions—check with the tourist office or your hotel before you hit the off-piste slopes.**

Lech

120 km (75 miles) west of Innsbruck, 4 km (2½ miles) north of Zürs.

Just down (literally) the road from Zürs, Lech is a fully-fledged community—and one of the most fashionable in the Alps. But there are more hotels in Lech than in Zürs, better tourist facilities, bigger ski schools, more shops, and more nightlife. Hotel prices are nearly as high. Celebrities, captains of industry, and royalty are often found in this very pretty Alpine village. Be sure to check with the hotel

of your choice about meal arrangements; some hotels recommend that you take half-board, which is usually a good deal.

GETTING HERE AND AROUND

From Zürs go north on the B198 for five minutes and you're in Lech. In summer you can continue north on the B198 down to the town of Warth and Reutte in Tyrol, near the German border. You can't get to Zürs or Lech via rail; take the train to Langen am Arlberg station, then transfer to a bus or taxi.

VISITOR INFORMATION

CONTACTS Lech-Zürs. ☎ *Dorf 2* ☎ 05583/2161–0 ☞ www.lechzuers.com.

Hotels

★ Post Lech

\$\$\$\$ | **HOTEL** | A gemütlich atmosphere enfolds in this family-owned Relais & Châteaux chalet hotel, with murals, flower boxes, and a wood-paneled interior of extravagant luxury. **Pros:** refined luxury in a historic setting; antiques artfully displayed throughout; huge spa with indoor and outdoor pools. **Cons:** very expensive; need to reserve well in advance; minimum one-week stay in winter. ☎ *Rooms from: €530* ☎ *Dorf 11* ☎ 05583/22060 ☞ www.postlech.com ☹ Closed mid-Apr.–mid-Jun and Oct.–Nov. ➔ 46 rooms ☹ Free breakfast.

Pfefferkorn's Hotel

\$\$\$\$ | **HOTEL** | A cozy yet spacious wood-paneled lobby makes you feel welcome the minute you enter the Pfefferkorn, and this warm-wood Alpine style continues into many of the guest rooms. **Pros:** warm atmosphere; very attentive staff; great location close to the main lifts. **Cons:** rooms near the street can be noisy; decor a little dated in places; lots of people coming and going. ☎ *Rooms from: €526* ☎ *Dorf 138* ☎ 05583/25250 ☞ www.pfefferkorns.net ☹ Closed May–Jun. and Oct.–Nov. ➔ 29 rooms ☹ No meals.

Romantik Hotel Krone

\$\$\$ | **HOTEL** | Across the street from two of the main lifts, this family-managed five-star hotel started life as a tavern in 1741 and is now providing hospitality of an altogether more luxurious variety. **Pros:** ski-in ski-out in winter; excellent cuisine; impressive spa. **Cons:** nighttime revellers can be heard; morning deliveries can be noisy too; smoking is allowed in the Krone Bar. ☎ *Rooms from: €480* ☎ *Dorf 13* ☎ *05583/2551* 🌐 *www.krone-lech.at* ☺ *Closed mid-Apr.–mid-Jun. and Oct.–Nov.* ➡ *53 rooms* 🍷 *Free breakfast.*

Nightlife

Lech has a lively après-ski and night-life scene—not nearly as overt as in nearby St. Anton or Ischgl, but partying is important to most Austrian ski villages, even ones as upscale as Lech. Prices vary from place to place, but in general a mixed drink will cost in the region of €15.

Après Ski Ice Bar

BARS/PUBS | The tradition of tea dancing (literally a dance at teatime, popular since Victorian times, especially at smart ski resorts) carries on après-ski at the ice-bar of the Tannbergerhof—but nowadays it's more disco than foxtrot. ☎ *Dorf 111* ☎ *05583/2202* 🌐 *www.tannbergerhof.com.*

Burg

BARS/PUBS | The bar in the Burg hotel in Oberlech features live music most nights. ☎ *Burg Hotel, Oberlech 266* ☎ *05583/22910* 🌐 *www.burghotel-lech.com.*

Goldener Berg

BARS/PUBS | The bar at the Goldener Berg is usually a hot après-ski spot, often with live music. ☎ *Goldener Berg, Oberlech 117* ☎ *05583/22050* 🌐 *www.goldener-berg.at/en.*

Krone Bar

BARS/PUBS | The bar in the Romantik Hotel Krone is open, and remains quite lively,

Say Käse, Please



In the last two decades, cheese making has undergone a magnificent revival in the region. Farmers produce more than 30 varieties of *Käse*—from Emmentaler to beer cheese, Tilsit to red-wine cheese, and *Bergkäse* (mountain cheese) in dozens of varieties. Look for discreet *KäseStrasse* signs along the road, pointing you toward the region's elite cheese makers, or for the word *Sennerei*, which means Alpine dairy (🌐 *www.kaesestrasse.at*).

until 2 or 3 am. ☎ *Dorf 13* ☎ *05583/2551* 🌐 *www.kronelech.at/cuisine/hotel-bar-lounge-arlberg.html.*

Activities

SKIING

Lech is linked with Oberlech and Zürs, with more than 30 ski lifts and cable cars, all accessed by the regional ski pass. This also allows skiers to take in the entire region, including Stuben, St. Christoph, and St. Anton, as well as Warth and Schröcken, newly linked by lift to Lech. The St. Anton area is also now linked to Zürs thanks to a gondola system, negating the need to take a ski-bus. The area as a whole includes more than 90 cable cars and lifts (many of them with heated seats) and 300 km (186 miles) of groomed pistes. In addition, there is a large network of cross-country trails.

The slopes in Lech are spread between 4,757 feet and 9,186 feet above sea level, including the runs of Rüfikopf, Madloch, and Mohnenfluh. Some 400 skiing instructors can help you master the craft here. Snowboarders have their own Fun

Park, and there is a floodlit toboggan run and horse-drawn sleigh rides.

For more information on skiing facilities, contact the tourist office in Lech.

Schruns-Tschagguns

140 km (87 miles) west of Innsbruck, 48 km (30 miles) southwest of Lech.

Author Ernest Hemingway spent many winters at the Schruns-Tschagguns skiing area in the Montafon Valley. Today neither of the towns—across the Ill River from each other—is as fashionable as the resorts on the Arlberg, but the views over the Ferwall Alps to the east and the mighty Rätikon on the western side of the valley are unsurpassed anywhere in Austria. In winter the heavy snowfalls here provide wonderful skiing. In fact, many believe the fully integrated ski area to be seriously underrated. The snow record is good, the runs are interesting, and a renaissance of the area's winter status is on the horizon. Many skiers head for Hochjoch-Zamang—the main peak at **Schruns**—to have lunch on the spectacularly sited sun terrace of the Kapell restaurant. Then it's on to Grabs-Golm over the river in **Tschagguns**. Others prefer the Silvretta-Nova run at Gaschurn and St. Gallenkirch. In summer, the heights are given over to climbers and hikers, the mountain streams to trout anglers, and the lowlands to tennis players.

GETTING HERE AND AROUND

From Innsbruck, take the A12/S16 west to the edge of Bludenz, then turn south onto the B188 to the Montafoner Tal (Montafon Valley). After about eight km (five miles) you will reach Schruns-Tschagguns. From Bregenz take the A14 south to join the B188. If you want to experience Alpine driving after your visit to town, continue south on the B188 to the Silvretta-Hochalpenstrasse (Silvretta High Alpine Road) to the Bielerhöhe at 7,000 feet, and then over many hairpin

curves into Tyrol and the Paznaun Valley. The cost of using the pass is €16.50 per car. Attempt the drive only in ideal weather conditions and if you have good brakes; in winter the pass is closed.

VISITOR INFORMATION

CONTACTS Montafon Valley. ☎ *Montafoner Strasse 21, Schruns* ☎ *050/6686* 🌐 *www.montafon.at.*

Restaurants

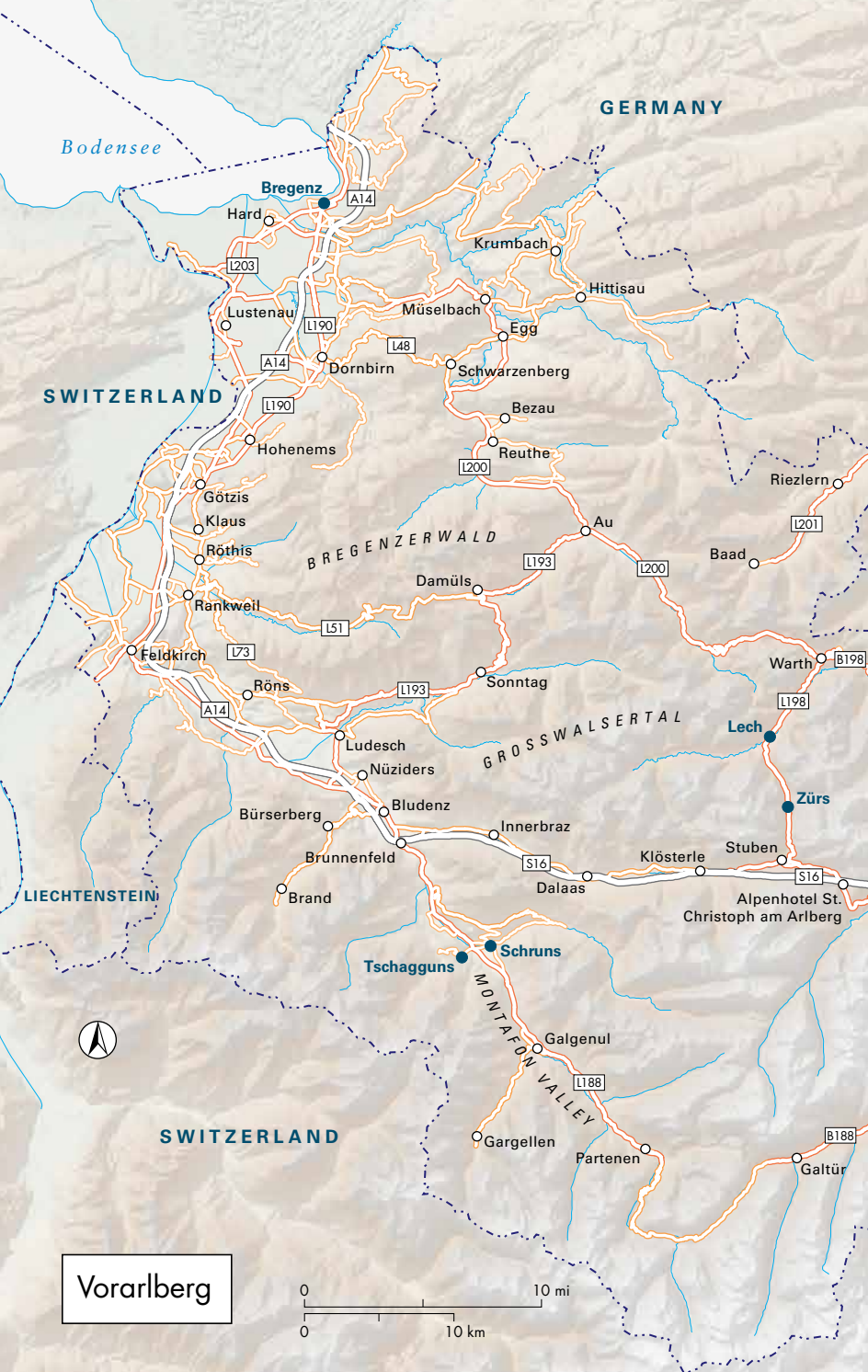
Gasthof Löwen

\$\$ | **AUSTRIAN** | Guests started eating here more than 500 years ago, and they've been coming back ever since. The old dining room has wood-paneled walls and is the perfect setting in which to enjoy a *Zwiebelrostbraten* (steak with onions) and a good red wine. Unfortunately, the historic tables with the beautiful inlay work are not for sale. Ernest Hemingway certainly enjoyed his stays in “the old inn with the antlers in Tschagguns.” There's also folk music performed here regularly. You can ask the staff if one of the five guest rooms is available. The reception is in the Montafoner Hof, just across the street, which belongs to the same family. **Known for:** traditional atmosphere; live folk music; solid Austrian fare. ☎ *Average main: €17* ☎ *Kreuzgasse 4, Tschagguns* ☎ *05556/72247* 🌐 *www.loewen-tschagguns.at* ☺ *Closed Mon.*

Hotels

Löwen Hotel

\$\$\$ | **HOTEL** | This enormous hotel looms over the heart of Schruns, but step inside and you'll find a welcoming (if not exactly intimate) place; a modern take on a traditional Austrian abode, with the rustic dark-wood theme carried elegantly through into the comfortable rooms. **Pros:** spacious and luxurious; enormous spa including a women-only section; glorious scenic setting. **Cons:** atmosphere can feel a bit formal; large size means no sense of intimacy; some



feel it lacks Austrian tradition. 📍 **Rooms from:** €350 📍 *Silvrettastrasse 8, Schruns* ☎ *05556/7141* 🌐 *www.loewen-hotel.com* 🕒 *Closed mid-Apr.–mid-May* 🛏 *85 rooms* 🍳 *Free breakfast.*

Montafoner Hof

\$\$\$ | **HOTEL** | There's a lot of local flavor in this popular and welcoming family-run hotel in Tschagguns, where the owner's hunting credentials are reflected in the delicious traditional food in the restaurant. **Pros:** Austrian hospitality at its finest; indoor-outdoor swimming pool; wonderful food. **Cons:** restaurant not great for vegetarians; some rooms not renovated; no air conditioning. 📍 **Rooms from:** €300 📍 *Kreuzgasse 9, Tschagguns* ☎ *05556/7100* 🌐 *www.montafonerhof.com* 🕒 *Closed May and end of mid-Oct.–mid-Dec.* 🛏 *48 rooms* 🍳 *Free breakfast.*

Activities

FISHING

The local mountain streams and rivers are full of fish. Licenses are available; ask the regional tourist office in Bregenz for detailed information on seasons and locations.

SKIING

Schruns is one of the skiing centers of the Montafon region, which also includes the Bartholomäberg, Gargellen, Gaschurn-Partenen, St. Gallenkirch-Gortipohl, Silbertal, and Vandans ski areas. They are together covered with a Montafon Ski Pass and comprise 65 lifts and 208 kilometers (129 miles) of groomed runs. Ski pass prices are attractive here, €109 for a two-day adult pass, for example, with discounts for seniors and children. For details and to book passes, visit 🌐 *www.montafon.at/en*.

Bregenz

189 km (117 miles) west of Innsbruck, 65 km (40 miles) northwest of Schruns-Tschagguns.

Lying along the southeastern shore of the Bodensee (Lake Constance) with the majestic Pfänder as its backdrop, Bregenz is where Vorarlbergers themselves come to make merry, especially in summer. The waterfront promenade is lined with inviting tree-shaded cafes, hip beach bar hangouts, and pier-end champagne pavilions, while an enormous floating stage is the open-air site for performances of grand opera and orchestral works (Verdi, Puccini, and Mozart are just some of the composers who have been featured). Bregenz is the capital of Vorarlberg, and has been the seat of the provincial government since 1819. The upper town has maintained a charming old-world character, while the lower city is packed with pedestrianized streets, shops, restaurants, museums, and galleries.

GETTING HERE AND AROUND

Bregenz is right at the northwestern tip of Austria, around 2½ hours by car or train from Innsbruck, via the Arlberg tunnel. It is actually quicker—around 1½ hours—to fly into Zurich Flughafen in neighboring Switzerland and then drive or train from there. You can also reach Bregenz from Munich in Germany in around 2½ hours by car, though train connections are poor.

For travel within Europe, there are also some small airports like St. Gallen-Altenrhein and Friedrichshafen that are within easy reach of Bregenz (by car or taxi) and offer seasonal flights.

Taxi fares in Bregenz start at about €8, so taking one even a short distance can be expensive. Call to order a radio cab. The city of Bregenz also runs a very efficient public bus line.

BUS INFORMATION **Bus.** 🌐 www.bregenz.travel/bregenz-by-city-bus.

FERRY COMPANIES **Vorarlberg Lines.**

✉ VL.Bodenseeschiffahrt, Seestrasse 4
☎ 05574/42868 🌐 www.vorarlberg-lines.at/en.

TAXI COMPANIES **City Taxi.**

☎ 05574/65400 🌐 www.citytaxi-bregenz.at.

FESTIVALS

★ **Bregenzer Festspiele**

MUSIC FESTIVALS | Bregenz is pleasant at any time of year, but a great time to visit is during the Bregenzer Festspiele (Bregenz Music Festival) in July and August. Acclaimed artists from around the world perform operas, operettas, and musical comedies on the festival's floating stage, part of the Festspiel und Kongresshaus (Festival Hall and Congress Center) complex. In front of the stage, the orchestra pit is built on a jetty, while the audience of 6,800 is safely accommodated on the 30-tier amphitheater on dry land—a unique and memorable setting for a concert. Reserve your tickets and hotels in advance, as performances and rooms sell out early. In the event of rain, the concert performance is moved indoors to the adjacent Festspielhaus. ✉ [Platz der Wiener Symphoniker 1](mailto:Platz.der.Wiener.Symphoniker.1) ☎ 05574/4076 🌐 www.bregenzerfestspiele.com/en.

Bregenzer Frühling

DANCE | The Bregenz Spring dance festival takes place between March and May each year in the city's iconic Festspielhaus. A springtime staple since 1987, the popular festival showcases high-quality ballet and modern dance performances from renowned ensembles all over the world. ✉ [Platz der Wiener Symphoniker 1](mailto:Platz.der.Wiener.Symphoniker.1) ☎ 05574/410–1511 🌐 www.bregenzer-fruehling.com.

VISITOR INFORMATION

CONTACTS **Tourist Information Vorarlberg.** ✉ [Poststrasse 11, Dornbirn](mailto:Poststrasse.11.Dornbirn)

☎ 05572/3770330 🌐 www.vorarlberg.at.



Herz-Jesu Kirche (Sacred Heart Church)

RELIGIOUS SITE | Located at the top end of Bergmannstrasse, the twin red-brick towers of the neo-Gothic Herz-Jesu Kirche are visible from far and wide. Built between 1905 and 1908 and entirely funded by the people of Bregenz, it is particularly notable for its bright and colorful stained-glass windows by Martin Hausle. ✉ [Kolpingplatz 1](mailto:Kolpingplatz.1) 🌐 www.pfarre-herzjesu.at.

Kunsthauus

MUSEUM | Vorarlberg has had its own modern art museum since 1997, and it sits right in the heart of Bregenz. This eye-catching, steel-and-concrete building with etched-glass panels was designed by Swiss architect Peter Zumtho, and is now used to showcase a series of ever-changing contemporary art exhibitions, with a big focus on video and multimedia (there's no permanent exhibition). The design is striking, with each room/floor lit by sunlight that enters through the translucent glass all around, but is not always easy to navigate; good luck finding the staircase on your first visit. ✉ Karl-Tizian-Platz ☎ 05574/485940 🌐 www.kunsthauus-bregenz.at ☎ €11 (free on first Friday of month) 🗨 Closed Mon.

Künstlerhaus Thurn und Taxis

MUSEUM | Owned by the princely Thurn und Taxis family until 1915, this building, erected in 1848, now contains a modern art gallery. The park surrounding the house is one of the largest public gardens on the Bodensee, with a host of rare trees and plants from around the world. ✉ [Gallusstrasse 10](mailto:Gallusstrasse.10) ☎ 05574/42751 🌐 www.kuenstlerhaus-bregenz.at.

Nepomuk-Kapelle

RELIGIOUS SITE | Stroll along the Kornmarktstrasse and you can't fail to notice this distinctive circular chapel. Built in 1757 to serve the city's fishermen and sailors, the Chapel of St. John of



The Pfänder cable car affords a breathtaking panorama of the Bodensee as it whizzes to the peak of the Pfänder mountain.

Nepomuk has a richly decorated high altar and several paintings in the rococo style. ✉ [Kornmarktstrasse 7](mailto:Kornmarktstrasse.7).

Parish Church of St. Gallus

RELIGIOUS SITE | Just around the corner from the foot of the **Meissnerstiege** (Meissner steps) lies the parish church of St. Gallus, the oldest in the lower part of Vorarlberg, which combines Romanesque, Gothic, and Rococo elements. The interior is decorated simply but beautifully with pastel coloring and subtle stuccos and paintings, instead of the usual excessive gilding. Look out for the multiple depictions of legendary Irish monk St. Gallus with his bear companion, particularly on the remarkable silver altar in the left side chapel. Empress Maria Theresa donated the money for the main altarpiece; see if you can spot the monarch's features on one of the shepherdesses depicted there. ✉ [Kirchplatz 3](mailto:Kirchplatz.3) 🌐 www.pfarre-st-gallus.at.

★ **Pfänder**

VIEWPOINT | **FAMILY** | The Pfänderbahn cable car takes you up to this 3,491-foot

peak overlooking Bregenz, one of the most famous lookout points in the region. From here, you can see four countries—Austria, Germany, Liechtenstein, and Switzerland—and almost 240 Alpine peaks. It's a breathtaking view, with the city directly below on the shores of the Bodensee and the lake stretching for 64 kilometers (40 miles) into the hazy distance. On your left lies the Rhine valley, and you can see the hills of Liechtenstein and Switzerland in the distance. Just across the water from Bregenz you'll notice the ancient and fascinating German island-city of Lindau in Bavaria, once a free state (a status it lost in 1802). The restaurant at the top is open throughout the summer, while children will enjoy the **Alpenwildpark**, a small outdoor zoo with Alpine ibex, mouflon, and wild boar that's open year-round. ✉ [Pfänderbahn - Bergstation](mailto:Pfänderbahn.Bergstation), Pfänder 3, Lochau ☎ 05574/421600 🌐 www.pfaenderbahn.at/en 🚠 Cable-car round-trip €13.60.

Seekapelle (Lake Chapel)

RELIGIOUS SITE | Next door to the current Rathaus (town hall), on the corner of Anton-Schneider-Strasse, is this beautiful old Lake Chapel, topped with an onion dome. The chapel was erected over the graves of a band of Swiss citizens, whose 1408 attempt to incorporate Bregenz into Switzerland was rejected. ☒ *Rathausstrasse 4* 📞 www.kath-kirche-vorarlberg.at/bregenz.

★ Seepromenade

TRAIL | Sweeping along the southeastern shore of the Bodensee, this peaceful lakeside promenade is the perfect place for a stroll any time of year. It runs all the way from the Festspielhaus to the harbor and is lined with charming cafes, hip bars, and tree-shaded benches all the way. As well as enjoying sweeping lake views in one direction, there are also city landmarks to see in the other, from the Neoclassical **Post Office**, to the glass-cube **Kunsthhaus**, to the local mountain **Pfänder**. If you want to wander even farther, the Pipeline promenade continues northward from the harbor all the way to Lochau, near the German border. Or, in the other direction, the lakeside gets more natural with some lovely picnic and swimming spots. ☒ *Seepromenade*.

★ Upper Town (Oberstadt)

HISTORIC SITE | Just a short walk but a whole world away from the lakeside, Bregenz's Upper Town is its historical heart. Walk all the way up Maurachgasse to the **Stadttor**, complete with a scary mummified shark (supposedly caught in the Bodensee). Through the gate is Ehregutaplatz, a pretty market square flanked by remains of the ancient city wall and overlooked by **Martinsturm**, a tower with an enormous onion dome. Built in 1601, it was the first Baroque construction on the Bodensee, though the chapel below dates back even further; step inside to see 14th-century frescoes. From here, amble along Martinsgasse to Graf-Wilhelm-Strasse and the **Altes Rathaus**,

the old town hall. This ornate, brightly shuttered, half-timber construction was completed in 1622. Behind here, on Eponastrasse, are the remnants of a **wall fresco** that depicts St. Christopher, St. Peter, and a kneeling abbot. Around the corner lies the 400-year-old castle **Deuring Schlössle**. This is now a private residence, but you can still admire its beautiful whitewashed facade. Better yet, head down the nearby **Meissnerstiege** passageway for a wider view of its majestic southwestern side. From here, you can also see the 16th century **Beckenturm**, named for bakers who were imprisoned here after short-changing their customers. ☒ *Ehregutaplatz 1*.

Vorarlberg Museum

MUSEUM | Looming over Kornmarktplatz, this state-of-the-art museum with its facade of concrete flowers (look closely and you'll see they are molds of plastic bottle bottoms) has roots dating back 150 years. Today, it's home to four floors of exhibitions on the history, culture, and day-to-day life of Vorarlbergers. Expect everything from relics of Brigantium, the Roman administrative city that once stood where Bregenz is today, to Gothic and Romanesque ecclesiastical works, to videoed interviews with current residents. Information in English can be limited, but it's worth the entrance fee alone for the extraordinary top-floor blackout room with an expansive view over the lake. The exhibits in the atrium are free to view. ☒ *Kornmarktplatz 1* 📞 *05574/46050* 🌐 www.vorarlbergmuseum.at 🎫 €9 (free for under 19s) ☺ *Closed Mon.*

🍴 Restaurants

Café Götze

☑ **CAFÉ** | Locals frequent this small, unpretentious café and bakery as it's known to have the best pastries in town. The location halfway between the waterfront and the Upper Town is convenient. **Known for:** gorgeous displays of cakes; wonderful chocolates;

elegant gift-wrapping for souvenirs.

☑ *Average main: €8* ☒ *Kaiserstrasse 9* 📞 *05574/44523* 🌐 www.conditorei-goetze.com ☒ *No credit cards* ☺ *Closed weekends.*

Gasthof Goldener Hirschen

☑ **ECLECTIC** | Allegedly the oldest tavern in Bregenz and close to the Upper Town, this rustic restaurant offers delicious traditional food and drinks in lively surroundings. Many say it's the most authentic Austrian eatery in town, great for *tafelspitz* (slow-cooked beef with horseradish). It also has tasty pasta dishes, including spicy spaghetti in a tomato, onion, bacon, and red pepper sauce. In spring, local asparagus is featured and later in the year the menu focuses on game. You won't go wrong with the apricot dumplings for dessert. **Known for:** lots of history; traditional seasonal specialties; reasonable prices. ☑ *Average main: €14* ☒ *Kirchstrasse 8* 📞 *05574/42815* 🌐 www.hotelweisseskreuz.at/goldener-hirschen ☺ *Closed Sun.*

Gasthof Kornmesser

☑ **AUSTRIAN** | This gorgeous Baroque townhouse, built in 1720 beside the iconic Nepomuk-Kapelle, is today a restaurant serving hearty Austrian dishes at very reasonable prices. Try the *Wienerschnitzel*, the *tafelspitz*, or the zander fish. Not ready for a full meal? Kornmesser also offers traditional beer snacks, like Bavarian veal sausages, as well as tasty sweet treats like apple strudel. **Known for:** excellent schnitzel; nice outdoor seating area; service can be slow when busy. ☑ *Average main: €17* ☒ *Kornmarktstrasse 5* 📞 *05574/54854* 🌐 www.kornmesser.at ☺ *Closed Mon.*

★ Weiss

☑ **AUSTRIAN** | Since it opened in summer 2020, Weiss has quickly become one of the city's top dining draws, with young owner-chefs Milena and Erik bringing their burgeoning international reputations to the heart of Bregenz. Billing itself as a restaurant-bar-café, Weiss offers everything from coffee and snacks to special five-course

menus of equally-sized dishes, making it an imaginative, unfussy, and surprisingly affordable dining experience. Along with neighbouring establishments like Petrus and Cafesito, Weiss has helped transform Anton-Schneider-Strasse into Bregenz's foremost foodie drag. **Known for:** delicious *krautspätzle* (cheese dumplings); extensive Austrian wine list; stays open late. ☑ *Average main: €13* ☒ *Anton-Schneider-Strasse 5* 📞 *05574/90859* 🌐 www.weiss-bregenz.at/en ☺ *Closed Tues.–Wed. No lunch.*

Wirtshaus am See

☑ **AUSTRIAN** | This striking half-timber house with a steep gabled roof is in an idyllic position right on the shore of the Bodensee, next to the floating stage used for the Bregenz Festival. With a fabulous lake view, diners can watch the steamers from the nearby harbor go by while enjoying classic Austrian dishes with an accent on fresh fish. Some dishes from Germany and Switzerland are also offered. The wine list is noteworthy, and in the winter the Chimney Room, with an open fire, is popular. **Known for:** terrace dining with a view; fresh fish right from the lake; excellent breakfast. ☑ *Average main: €20* ☒ *Seepromenade 2* 📞 *05574/42210* 🌐 www.wirtshausamsee.at ☺ *Closed Jan. and Feb.*

🏨 Hotels

Grand Hotel Bregenz

☑ **HOTEL** | Adjacent to the Festspielhaus at the western end of the Seepromenade, the Grand Hotel has the look and atmosphere of a typical MGallery chain property: functionally modern with every comfort. **Pros:** lovely waterside location and lake views; excellent breakfast; conveniently close to the train station. **Cons:** chain-hotel feel; surrounded by parking lots; can get busy due to casino next door. ☑ *Rooms from: €170* ☒ *Platz der Wiener Symphoniker 2* 📞 *05574/461000* 🌐 www.all.accor.com ➡ *105 rooms* 🍳 *Free breakfast.*

Hotel Schwärzler

\$\$ | HOTEL | Bregenz's most upmarket accommodation option is right on the edge of town, with guest rooms that offer clean, crisp, modern lines and muted colors (and, occasionally, balconies overlooking the serene garden). **Pros:** big and varied breakfast buffet; good gym and sauna facilities; bicycles available for use by guests. **Cons:** a bit of a trek from town center; Wi-Fi is patchy in some areas; street-side rooms can be noisy. **📞 Rooms from:** €165 **📍 Landstrasse 9** **☎ 05574/4990** **🌐 www.schwaerzler.s-hotels.com** **➡ 61 rooms** **🕒 Free breakfast.**

Weisses Kreuz

\$\$ | HOTEL | This traditional, family-run, turn-of-the-20th-century house is in a great central location, on the edge of the pedestrian zone, and is noted for its friendly staff and comfortable, modern rooms; those overlooking the private park out back are quieter. **Pros:** traditional hospitality hub in Bregenz; handy central location; delicious breakfast. **Cons:** bar music can be heard until late; creaky floorboards; some rooms lack views. **📞 Rooms from:** €140 **📍 Römerstrasse 5** **☎ 05574/4988** **🌐 www.hotel-weisseskreuz.at** **➡ 44 rooms** **🕒 Free breakfast.**

Performing Arts

Theater am Kornmarkt

CONCERTS | Constructed in 1838 as a grain storehouse, back when Bregenz was still an important commercial hub, this listed building was converted into a 700-seat theater in 1954. Today, it is part of the Vorarlberg Landestheater, showing a roster of contemporary and classic plays, along with many family-friendly productions and live music concerts. **📍 Kornmarktstrasse 2** **☎ 05574/42018** **🌐 www.landestheater.org**

Activities

BICYCLING

It's possible to cycle around the Bodensee in two to four days, traveling all the while on well-marked and-maintained paths (don't forget your passport). If this sounds too strenuous, parts of the route can be covered by boat. Rental bikes can be hired at local sports shops or at the train station in Bregenz; the tourist office can provide you with maps and details. Another cycling path, popular with families, follows the Rhine—a 70-kilometer (43-mile) stretch from Bregenz south to Bludenz. Parts of the route are possible by train.

SKIING

Pfänder

SKIING/SNOWBOARDING | There is some modest skiing on the Pfänder mountain, in Bregenz's backyard, which has a cable tramway and two drag lifts. The views are stunning from atop the peak, stretching as far as the Black Forest and the Swiss Alps. **📍 Pfänderbahn (Talstation), Steinbruchgasse 4** **☎ 05574/421600** **🌐 www.pfaenderbahn.at**

WATER SPORTS

With the vast lake at its doorstep, Bregenz offers a variety of water sports, from swimming to fishing to windsurfing.

Ländle SUP

WATER SPORTS | Try your hand at paddleboarding at this watersports center north of Bregenz. Certified instructors offer a series of courses for all levels, including intensive one-on-ones, as well as sunset tours of the lake. **📍 Am Kaiserstrand, Lochau** **☎ 0664/7388-3029** **🌐 www.laendle-sup.at**

Sporer-Yachting

SAILING | You can learn to sail at this segelschule in Lochau, three kilometers (two miles) north of Bregenz, although a minimum of two weeks is required for a full course. **📍 Alte Fähre 1, Lochau** **☎ 05574/52247** **🌐 www.sporer-yachting.com**