

The ultimate for connoisseurs: Holidays in the Holiday Region Hohe Salve

You can't miss it – the [Hohe Salve](#) (1,829 m), its conical shape soaring into the skies and proudly giving its name to the holiday region in the west of the Kitzbühel Alps. And rightly so, because from up here you'll have fabulous views. The intermediate terminus, the reservoir and Salvensee Lake with a water playground beckon to frolic and enjoy. The wonderful panorama is best enjoyed from the revolving restaurant-terrace "Umadum Stub'n" while tucking into some traditional treats. After that, pay a visit to the highest located pilgrimage church in Austria, the little Salvenkirche. And next day, maybe set off to the Kleine Salve (1,560 m)? With the Salvistabahn gondola lift making your way uphill is a breeze, then stop off at KRAFTalm (1,355 m) for some refreshments. Now you'll have enough energy to tackle the multiple options for hikers and mountain bikers. Altogether, the route network spans some 180 km for cyclists and bikers, with hikers having some 350 km of the most scenic hiking trails available. An absolute insider tip for connoisseurs is Kelchsau – a wonderfully secluded side valley with a picture-perfect village of the same name. Past alpine huts, cows and rushing streams, Schafsiedel (2,448 m) is a great destination for those aiming for the top.

With the Salvistabahn to KRAFTalm and up to Kleine Salve

Kleine Salve (1,565 m), sister of the high namesake, may be some 250 m lower but can certainly hold its own. Since winter 2020/2021 the 10-seat gondola of the Salvistabahn leads from Itter along 2 sections in just 10 minutes up to Kleine Salve – naturally also in summer. Environmental compatibility and sustainability are important to the operators. The lifts are run to 100% on green energy, the reservoir is fed with fresh spring-, melt- and rainwater. In terms of comfort and harmonious look there is also an overall concept – the lift stations perfectly blend in with the landscape thanks to their flat design and natural colours. And when it comes to harmony, the [KRAFTalm](#) at the intermediate terminus also scores big. The 4-star mountain hotel replaces the former lodge in which the Hölzl family accommodated its guests since 1909. Recently renovated from the ground up, the building now shines with a skilful mix of traditional style with lots of wood and modern-stylish look with washed concrete. What remains is the cordiality of the hosts – here everyone is on first name terms. And of course, delicious Tyrolean cooking true to grandma Hölzl's recipes is still served.

Alp cheese, Tilsit, yoghurt and the like: Delicious treats from the Niederkaseralm

An absolute highlight on any cycling tour or hike through picturesque Kelchsau: A stop for some food and drink at [Niederkaseralm](#) (1,100 m). Because enjoyment is a must. As is tradition. For many centuries now the farmers from Hopfgarten have farmed the Niederkaseralm. Since then the cows' milk, who spend their time on the Alpine pasture from May to September, has been processed into cheese, butter, yoghurt and the like. Landlady Johanna Astner recommends whey with elderberry syrup to go with the home-baked bread, bacon and cheese. Most of the ten to eleven tonnes of cheese produced on average per season is sold by the farmers in the valley straight from their farms. The tasty Alpine cheese and the Tilsit as main varieties as well as fancy creations with chilli, pepper or herbs, which the cheesemaker makes as the mood takes him, are also available year-round in the Hopfgartner farm shop – and in summer of course directly on the Alpine farm. Those who want to take a look behind the scenes of the Alpine farm and food production can join a tour through the show dairy – including cheese tasting, of course.

Of national fame: Pilgrimage Church Mariastein

A couple of farmhouses and cows – that’s pretty much all there is in the smallest village in the Holiday Region Hohe Salve with its 458 inhabitants. Instead, there is plenty of history. Because on a rock in [Mariastein](#) at 575 metres above sea level towers one of the most famous pilgrimage sites in Austria. Built around 1360 to protect the road between Innsbruck and Rosenheim, Mariastein was initially a castle. But it soon lost its strategic significance, became a church and eventually in the 18th century, after an appearance by the Virgin Mary, a pilgrimage site. It is considered a true power place, which pilgrims already discovered centuries ago on the Way of St. James. The centrepiece is the Shrine of Our Lady in the 42 m high tower, accessible along exactly 142 steps. Particularly worth seeing: the picture of the Virgin Mary with miraculous powers from the mid-15th century. The former Hall of Knights today houses the Castle Museum. The most important exhibits are the former Tyrolean state regalia, the archducal hat and the sceptre, which count among the state’s most precious treasures. The church can be visited daily between 8:00 and 18:00, admission is free. Tip: Hike here from Angerberg in about an hour.

Cool tip for hot days: Hundalm ice and stalactite cave

Even at the height of summer, temperatures are around freezing point: Better take a jacket and cap, if the [Hundalm ice and stalactite cave](#) is your destination for the day. The guided tour takes half an hour (8 Euro for adults, 4 Euro for children) and reveals mystical worlds. Equipped with a headlamp and helmet, the tour leads through a narrow gorge down into the interior of the mountain and into the maze with its many branches and forks. Always accompanied by a guide from the cave explorer association. Ice formations up to seven metres thick grow next to mystical stalactite shapes, which still pose riddles. Some of the stalactites are up to 350,000 years old, highlight is the “Christhead” – a rock formation that resembles the Head of Christ. The only ice and stalactite cave in Western Austria open to the public is a true gem, which has been under conservation since 1956. The entrance is at 1,520 metres, above Angerberg at Hundsalmjoch Ridge (1,350 m). This moderately difficult full-day hike (6.5 kilometres, 870 m elevation gain) up to the cave is rewarding not only because of the destination. Because here you are following a stage of the Tyrolean Eagle's Trail – with remarkable carvings that incite to take photos at the Eagle’s nest.

Simply timeless: Mediterranean cuisine comes upon imperial desserts

“Mediterranean gourmet cuisine with a touch of Alpine flair”, that’s how founder Monika Pirchmoser and head chef Tamara Lerchner describe the concept of the Restaurant “[timeless](#)” in Hopfgarten. Where, by the way, the ambience alone is already tasteful, because in the restored vault from the 16th century the walls breathe history. The two power-women have joined the community of Green Chefs, who stand for fairness and responsibility in gastronomy. “This begins with paying your staff fairly and ends with the products”, the head chef says. As far as possible she cooks regionally and organically. Tamara Lerchner’s speciality is the classic among Austrian desserts: Kaiserschmarrn (sugared and shredded pancakes). In her lessons she reveals the perfect preparation to her guests – following an original imperial and royal recipe. “What’s special about this is that the dough first goes into the oven”, he explains. “A bit of sugar on top, let it caramelize. Only then is the mix gently roasted in the pan until golden brown.” The workshop is held every Thursday at 16:00, the price of Euro 19 includes a tasting, a glass of milk as well as the traditional recipe

Stories to go with cheese: The two milksops from Hopfgarten

Milksop story number one starts like this: “Old, but new. 1654 is inscribed on the crown of Rehaberhof Farm. This is where we grew up. Markus and Thomas. Two milk-freaks.” That’s what it says on the back of the packaging for their cheese “Camembert Nature”. Then Markus (29) and Thomas (31) tell us how they got the idea for their cheese dairy. “Our passion became our profession. And in the ancient farm a brand-new dairy was built. This is where we live and work: the milksops.” That basically already says a lot about the two brothers, who call themselves milksops and make nothing but Camembert on their farm at Hopfgarten. Organic, of course. The milksops don’t just wrap their Camembert in some packaging, but tell stories, their milksops stories, to go with it. Story number two continues like this: “Two living rooms for chilling. The small one for the milksops. The big one for the staff. Unless they are outside enjoying nature and transforming the lush grass, herbs and flowers into the finest organic milk.” This story goes with the Camembert with walnut, there is also pistachio and chilli. Their cheese dairy has been operating since October 2017.

<https://www.milchbuben.at/>

Holiday Region Hohe Salve

The Holiday Region Hohe Salve links the town and countryside. Wörgl with some 14,000 inhabitants, shopping facilities, restaurants and cafés is considered the gateway of the Kitzbühel Alps. The towns of Hopfgarten, Itter, Kelchsau, Angath, Angerberg, Mariastein and Kirchbichl each have their own charm – with rural structures and lots of romanticism in unspoiled nature, beautiful taverns and churches. In summer, guests appreciate the numerous bike and hiking options around Hohe Salve (1,829 m), the most scenic panoramic mountain in the Kitzbühel Alps. Exciting climbing routes, idyllic swimming spots, rustic huts and a wide range of guided tours and events make the region a paradise for those who enjoy holidays in the mountains.

Getting here

Car: From Munich along the A 8 and the A 12 to Wörgl-Ost/Brixental (road tax disc mandatory). Continue along the B 171 to Wörgl (1:20 h driving time)

Rail: By train to Wörgl main station. From here guests travel free with the ÖBB (Austrian Federal Railways). The guest card is also your ticket for the entire Kitzbühel Alps

By plane: To Innsbruck (60 km), Munich (106 km) or Salzburg (130 km)

Hotel industry

More than 7,000 guest beds, 10 hotels in the 4-star segment, many more excellent hotels, inns, guesthouses, private rooms and holiday apartments, 2 camping sites with a total of 330 pitches. Some 5,000 overnight stays are recorded annually

Hiking

About 350 km signposted hiking trails, around 21 rest stops at Alpine lodges, mountain restaurants and snack stations, numerous guided tours and themed trails

Climbing

The largest climbing hall in the Tyrolean lowlands is located in Wörgl with around 200 climbing routes of difficulty levels 3 to 10, 15 metres wall height and a 300 m² large boulder area

Biking and cycling

Some 180 km cycling and mountain bike routes, panoramic routes with wonderful vistas, good local rental options, special accommodation for bikers

Fun in the wet and swimming

1 swimming lake, 1 outdoor pool, 1 moor bathing beach

Adventure worlds

The most scenic panoramic mountain in the Kitzbühel Alps – the Hohe Salve – features 360° views and hiking trails for young and old, a revolving terrace “Umadum Stub’n” as well as the little Salvenkirche Church. A highlight for children is the playground “Salvi’s Kraxxl-Platz” with a Salven-giant that can be climbed right next to the summit restaurant

Other activities

Running, walking and trail running, canyoning, fishing, paragliding, minigolf, skittles and bowling, hikes with llamas, alpacas and ponies, etc., 3 golf courses within less than an hour’s drive

Everything included

The Kitzbühel Alps are pioneers in matters of mobility. The four holiday regions Hohe Salve, Brixental, St. Johann in Tirol and Pillerseetal have set new standards together with their mobility concept. Thus, the Kitzbüheler Alpen Card (guest card) automatically also serves as a train and urban railway ticket for the local transport with frequent departures. On the 66 km route between Wörgl and Hochfilzen with its 18 stations, some 60 regional and urban trains run daily. Those who check in electronically before setting off on their holiday, enjoy free transport already when making their way here from Wörgl. Also included are the Regio and City buses of the holiday region Hohe Salve – and that not only in the near vicinity, but all the way across to Kitzbühel.

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