



Via Alpina
Discover the Alps!

On walking trails through the eight alpine countries
The Austrian and German stages



Legende
Legenda
Legend

Via Alpina

Autobahn, Schnellstrasse/Autostrada/Autoroute, voie rapide Tunnel/Tunnel/tunnel/Tunnel	Autocosta/Motorway, dual carriageway Prestor/Tunnel
Hauptstrasse/Strada principale/Route principale	Giornata cesta/Main road
Nebenstrasse/Strada secondaria/Route secondaire	Stranska cesta/Secondary road
Eisenbahn/Ferrovía/Voie ferrée	Zeleznica/Railway

Metropole/Metropoli/Metropole	LYON Metropoli/Metropole
Stadt (gross)/Città principale/Ville principale	Bergamo Giorno meta/Main city
Stadt (landes)/Città secondaria/Ville secondaria	Lecco Manjške mesto/Secondary city
Dorf, Ortsteil/Altre comune, frazione/Autre commune, hameau	Silvino Druga občina, vasica/Other town, hamlet
Grübel/Cima/Sommit	P. d'Assenza Vrh/Summit
Passo/Colle/Coi	Prelaz/Pass
Hütte/Walige, capanna/Refuge, cabane	Kočar/Mountain hut
Staatsgrenze/Confine di Stato/Frontière internationale	Državna meja/State border
Regions, Landes- oder Kantonsgrenze/ Canton de Région, Land e Canton/ Limite di région, land ou canton	Regijska, deželna ali kantonska meja/ Region, land or canton border
Departments- oder Provinzgrenze/ Canton de Département e Provincia/ Limite de département ou province	Departmentska ali pokrajinska meja/ Department or province border
Fluss/Flume/Rivière	Reka/River
See/Lago/Lac	Jezero/Lake

0 10 20 30 40 50 km

Art: graphi Celotnik - Ranko/Art: Celotnik - Ranko © Via Alpina - 11/2004



The Via Alpina...

... is an international long-distance path that was established in 1999 on the initiative of the Association La Grande Traversée des Alpes. It takes the walker from Trieste in Italy via Slovenia, Austria, Germany, Switzerland, Liechtenstein and France through to Monaco. There are a total of **345 day stages on international walking paths**, enticing you to visit the Alps mountain range as the greatest European natural space, the cradle of Alpine sports and the refuge of a unique flora and fauna. But the Alps are not just a place of nature, but also of culture, and above all of habitat, something worth being preserved in its present form for its inhabitants and visitors.

In accordance with this the VIA ALPINA is pursuing the objectives of sustainable development, which are also the objectives of the **Alpine Convention**, the treaty signed in 1991 by all Alpine states to protect the natural expanses and habitats of the Alps. Particularly in the protocols Tourism and Spatial Planning and Sustainable Development, the objectives of the Alpine Convention are the same as those of the VIA ALPINA.

A small example, an extract from the protocol, Tourism, Art. 6 „Orientation of tourist development“

(1), „The contractual parties shall integrate the interests of conservation and protection of the countryside into the promotion of tourism. They are obliged if possible to promote only projects that are in harmony with the landscape and the environment“ (2). They shall introduce sustainable policies that strengthen the competitiveness of nature-oriented tourism, thus making an important contribution to the socio-economic development of the Alpine region. (...)“

No new trails were set up along the course of the VIA ALPINA, but the existing network of trails, with the European long-distance trails, was connected to the ten Austrian long-distance trails and the numerous regional trails.

The VIA ALPINA passes through many different areas. It opens up the **entire wealth of culture and landscape of the Alps**, which could not be more wide-ranging. Cities, coastal areas, abandoned mining villages, remote peaks and widely visited tourism venues alternate with one another. It crosses national borders more than 60 times and passes through ten national parks, seventeen national parks and numerous nature reserves. **All the trails can be walked – in the summer months – easily and without additional equipment such as crampons or ropes**, as fixed rope routes or crossing glaciers are consciously avoided. But in the high mountains there are many sections that are somewhat exposed and secured with wire rope, so that a **head for heights and sure-footedness are to some extent necessary**.

Each stage has at least one place to stay overnight, of course, and there are usually destinations between the stages as well, allowing routes to be planned individually. **All trails are well marked and sign-posted**, and in addition bear the logo of the VIA ALPINA, which stretches like a red thread through the entire Alpine mountain range. The logos change colour, marking the **five different paths**, which is how they are differentiated. But we still recommend that you take regional walking maps with you, as the logos only indicate the VIA ALPINA from time to time, but cannot be regarded as a continuous signposting for the path.



Over the Karnischen Kamm ("Carnic ridge"), through the Zillertal, via the Wettersteingebirge, through the Große Walsertal, across the Rätikon and Silvretta – the Red Trail through Austria, Germany, South Tyrol, Liechtenstein and Switzerland

The VIA ALPINA leads across the Wurzen pass from Slovenia to Austria. You follow the entire course of the Carnic ridge from east to west, enter the fascinating world of geology and learn about the horrors of the First and Second World Wars on the „Friedensweg“ („Peace Path“), Via the Drei Zinnen and the Riesferner group, the Via Alpina takes you across South Tyrol, before returning to Austrian soil at the Pfirscher Joch. Along the entire Zillertal and through the Zillertal Alps Highland Natural Park, through the small mountaineering village of Ginzling and via Finkenberg, you reach the Rastkogel lodge, from where a detour to Innsbruck forks off from the VIA ALPINA.

This detour goes past the Weidener, Lizumer- and Glungezer lodges to the Patscherkofel and down to the Alpine city of Innsbruck, the seat of the Permanent Secretariat of the Alpine Convention and a cultural centre surrounded by a breathtaking mountain world. Via the Nordtette you reach the Plets lodge, and you return to the VIA ALPINA via the Hällangerhaus lodge and the Birkspitze, the highest mountain in the Karwendel. Because this takes you from the Rastkogel lodge back to the Kellerjoch, into the silver town of Schwaz and right through the middle of the Karwendel Alpine Park to the Lamerenjoch lodge, the Falken lodge and the Karwendelhaus lodge. Via Scharnitz and the Leutasch you then again ascend into the Wettersteingebirge, crossing the border to Germany, staying overnight in the Meier lodge, before returning to Austria via the Schachenhaus lodge and the Keintalanger lodge on the Gatterl. Continuing over the Ehrwaldner Alm, past the Seebensee lake and the Coburger lodge, you descend to Siebenbrunn and via the Wolfstahauser lodge to Berwang, cross the Röllachtal valley and come to the Lechtal valley. This valley, announced as a Natura 2000 area and established as the „Wildfluslandschaft Tiroler Lechtal“ Natural Park, is the preserve of one of the last still intact river systems of Europe.

From Similaun in the Allgäu Alps – the Yellow Trail through Austria to the Silvretta

The highest point of the VIA ALPINA in the entire alpine region is reached at the Similaun lodge, crossing from South Tyrol into the Ötztal of North Tyrol. You have to climb to 3039m above sea level, but the view over the mountainscape is breathtaking. This route was used by early hunters, because the „Ötzi“, the iceman, was found not far from the lodge. A monument marks the precise site where he was found and describes the spectacular events leading to his discovery by the Simon couple.

The VIA ALPINA leads from the Similaun lodge, via the Martin Busch lodge, down to the highest situated village – along with Obergrün – in Tyrol, to Vent. This mountaineering village at the foot of the Wildspitze is well-known for its idyllic mountain climbing and unspoilt natural beauty. This panoramic route continues to the Tiefenbachferner and down to Zwieselstein. Via the Kettenbachferner and the Pitztaler Joch, you reach the unspoiled Mittelbergferner and the Braunschweiger lodge. Walking along the Pitztal, you cross the northern entrance of the Venet to reach the Inntal in the direction of Zams. From here you can now set off for the heart of the Lechtal Alps. The Memmingen lodge is an ideal place to stay before making the descent the next day into the wonderful Lechtal. Now you still have to cross the Allgäu Alps before coming to Oberstdorf in the Allgäu at the end of the Yellow Trail.

CHARACTERISTICS

- Rich in variation, alpine on the Karnischen Kamm, leisurely through the Zillertal, breathtaking through the Karwendel, culture-related from Hachtanberg to the Große Walsertal and high-alpine in the Rätikon and in the Silvretta
- Highlights in Carinthia**
 - Geo-trail on the Karnischen Kamm, going back 500 million years through the history of the
 - Earth, numerous fossils right by the path
 - Lesachtal – Europe's landscape of the year
 - Maria Lugana basilica
- In Tyrol and Bavaria**
 - Mountaineering village of Ginzling and Zillertal Alps Highlands Natural Park
 - Silver town of Schwarz, show mine
 - Karwendel Alpine Park
 - Alpine city of Innsbruck
 - Alpinarium Galtür
 - Hunting lodge of King Ludwig II.
 - Zugspitze and Wetterwand
 - Natura 2000 area Lechtal and „Wildfluslandschaft Tiroler Lechtal“ Natural Park
 - Allgäuer Hochalpen Nature Reserve
- In Vorarlberg**
 - Unique variety of landscapes between Hochtannberg, Walgau and the Rhine valley
 - Tannberg region, with Rhine-Danube watershed and the Kalbele and Korber lakes
 - Großes Walsertal Biosphere Reserve with St. Gerold Provoist
 - Feldkirch's historical centre

WALKING MAPS

Österreichischer Alpenverein: AV 30/n, 30/2, 30/5, 30/6, 3/3, 2/1, 2/1 – www.alpenverein.at

Freytag&Berndt: WK 251, WK 2, WK 351, WK 372 – www.freytagberndt.com

Kompass: Nr. 43, 24, 3, 4 – www.kompass.at

Bayerisches Landesvermessungsamt München: Topographic Map Allgäu Alps www.geodaten.bayern.de

WALKING MAPS

Österreichischer Alpenverein: AV 35/h, 35/2, 5/h, 5/2, 5/3, 31/5, 4/2, 4/3, 2/2, 3/2, 2/6 www.alpenverein.at

Freytag&Berndt: WK 224, 223, 182, 152, 151, 321, 322, 252, 351, 346, 371, 373 www.freytagberndt.com

Kompass: Nr. 64, 60, 47, 57, 82, 037, 26, 5, 07, 25, 04, 3, 2, 21, 41 – www.kompass.at

Bayerisches Landesvermessungsamt München: Topographic Map: Werdenfeiser Land, Allgäuer Alps – www.geodaten.bayern.de



Via Alpina through the foothills of the Schilcher wine-growing area, across the Koralm, through Admont, over the northern Limestone Alps, through three National Parks, through the Chiemgau, across the Bavarian pre-Alps to Garmisch-Partenkirchen, Schwangau and Füssen – the Purple Trail in Austria and Germany

Branching off from the Red Trail in the Triglav massif, the Purple Trail reaches the Austrian border on the Seebergattel. With a short detour to the rich views of the Hochobir, or to the well-known Obir driptone caves, you reach Bad Eisenkappel, and on via the Petzen to Bleiburg and via Lavamünd and the Soboth to Eibiswald. Across the Koralm, the summer meadows of the Lipitzaner on the Stubai and via the Gatterl, you continue on to Knittelfeld, past the Benedictine abbey of Seckau, to Trieben and Admont, the gate way to the National Park of Cesauze, famous worldwide for housing the world's largest monastic library via the Haller Mauern and through the second longest walkable rocky gorge in Austria, the Dr-Vogelgesang gorge, and after Spital am Pyhrn, you arrive in the Limestone Alps National Park, and continue via the Tote Gebirge („Dead Mountains“) to the world heritage sites of Bad Gosersee and Gosau. Across the Gosaukamm, face to face with the Großen Bischofsmütze and the Dachstein massif, the VIA ALPINA follows the path to Lungözt and on the south flank of the Tennengebirge to Werfen, where the Burg Höhenwerfen is poised majestically above the river Salzach.

Now you stroll at the foot of the impressive Hochkogel massif to Hinterthal and Maria Alm and across the Steinerne Meer to the Berchtesgaden National Park. One more detour to Austria, via the Neue Traunsteiner lodge and the Reiter Alm to Unken, before entering the Chiemgau and from there straight to two mountains with the most beautiful views, the Hochfeln and the Hochgern, and on to Marquarstein. Via the Kampenwand, with a short stop at the Priener lodge, you reach Sachrang and then, via the Spitzsteinhaus, you arrive in Austria. After a visit to the passion play venue of Frl, you continue via the Zollhausbrücke on to Obervaudorf, past the Brunnstein, the Großen Traithen and the Rottwand to the Spitzingsee lake, and via the Risskogel to Kreuth. After the final stage in the Mangfall mountains you reach Lengries, from where you climb up to the Bavarian pre-Alps, via the Benediktenwand and the Herzogstanzl to Eschenlohe and via the Wank to the Olympic city of Garmisch-Partenkirchen. To the north of Garmisch, past the Pflegersee lake and along out of the Elmabach valley, you reach Linderhof in the Grasswangtal, enjoy a luxurious overnight stay in the castle hotel, before carrying on, via the isolated Ammergebirge, to the tourism strongholds of Schwangau and Füssen, with their world-famous fairy tale castles of Neuschwanstein and Hochenschwangau. As if this was not enough, you also pay a visit to Germany's highest situated mountain ruins, the Burg Falkenstein, before arriving in Pfaffenrot, and continuing via the Tannheimer mountains to Austria and into the Tannheimer valley. But soon you are ascending again, climbing the Allgäu Alps and following the Jubiläumsteg („Jubilee path“) to the Prinz-Luitpold-Haus lodge, where you come onto the Red Trail. The two trails briefly run together, before you branch off to the north, taking on the descent via the Edmund-Probst-Haus lodge to Oberstdorf. Here the Purple Trail, the third in the association along with the Yellow and Red Trails, comes to an important junction in the Allgäu

Mountaineering Villages

The "Mountaineering Villages" initiative originated from an idea of the Austrian Alpine Association. Together with the Federal Ministry for Agriculture and Forestry, Environment and Water Management, in short the Ministry of Life, selected communities and regions all over Austria were presented in the context of soft summer and winter tourism.

The exemplary effect of the Mountaineering Villages stretches above all to the active efforts to implement the objective of sustainable development in the Alpine region, in harmony with, and naturally in compliance with, all relevant legal regulations and programmes. The promotion and further development of the Mountaineering Villages is thus in harmony with the implementation protocols of the Alpine Convention.

Mountaineering Villages are exemplary regional cores of development in sustainable Alpine tourism, with a corresponding tradition. They guarantee professional tourism resources for mountaineers, provide an excellent quality of landscape and environment, and are committed to upholding local values of culture and nature. As Alpine centres of competence, Mountaineering Villages rely on self responsibility, capability and sovereignty, as well as a responsible and environmentally aware behaviour of their guests on the mountain.

Mountaineering Villages represent holiday destinations for a specific group of tourists. A group that is looking for rest and relaxation, but that also wants to explore the open countryside, and aims to spend an active holiday far from the large centres of tourism. Mountaineering Villages are shining examples in the implementation of the Alpine Convention, which is why they are responsible for doing justice to the protocols and objectives of the Convention as much as possible. This can be seen in initiatives to use public transport wherever possible, in offering regional products in the partner businesses of Mountaineering Villages, in the way community residents interact responsibly with their environment, and especially, of course, in connection with the range of Alpine activities on offer. But living traditions, Alpine history, culture and agriculture have also always characterised these communities, and play an essential part in creating the personal charm of each individual location.

Via Alpina crosses several villages part of the Mountaineering Villages programme. For instance in the Große Walsertal valley on the Red Trail, all six municipalities, also part of the UNESCO-Biosphere Park, are mountaineering villages. But also Kartitsch, Obertilliach, Untertilliach and Lesachtal on the foot of the Karnischer Kamm mountain range are members of the initiative; and not to be forgotten the small village of Ginzling in the Zillertal valley.

More information about the philosophy of the project as well as details to all 17 mountaineering villages in Austria can be found on the website www.bergsteigerdoerfer.at.



Specific hiking offers on the Purple Trail

Country	Austria
Land	Salzburg
Provider	Hochkönigs Bergreich
Via Alpina stages	Purple trail, A 36 – A 38
Type	5-day tour with baggage transport
Price per person	5 nights/10 HB 299,- EUR
Bookings	region@hochkoenig.at
Information	Region Hochkogel Am Gemeindeplatz 7 5761 Maria Alm Tel.: +43 6582 20388 Tel.: +43 6582 20388-20 info@hochkoenig.at region@hochkoenig.at www.hochkoenig.at

One very beautiful – and impressive – way to start walking the Via Alpina is from the foot of the Hochkogel. Four day stages from Bischofshofen to Saalfelden, a stress-free journey by train, the comfort of walking without packs, a return via beautiful meadows and the excellent local cuisine all help make this section of the Via Alpina particularly appealing.

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www.via-alpina.org

