

### **Introduction to the Austrian Tyrol**

The challenge to explore and enjoy the majestic beauty of Austria's mountain ranges was the inspiration for Walter Ingham to begin his winter travel business over 80 years ago. But he quickly discovered that the summers were just as beautiful and Inghams love affair with Austria has kept on growing.

It is hard not fall under the spell of the Austrian mountain villages in the Tyrol. The picturesque wooden chalets laden by snow in the winter, are a feast of colour in summer. Nearly every balcony is taken over by geraniums. Window boxes filled to bursting adorn every café, hotel or restaurant, while wild flowers cover the undulating verdant green pastures. This scenery filled with streams, gushing waterfalls and glacial lakes against the backdrop of the Austrian Alps makes you want to get outside immediately.

The early Inghams holidays were a little strenuous, based on hut to hut tours. But no longer, while our range of activities have grown and diversified so have the options for relaxation. A good cappuccino, local beer or massage are never far away. We have even introduced some monastery escapes such as the 300 year St. Georgenberg-Fiecht, ten minutes away from the Tyrolean town of Schwaz.

One of the great joys in small mountain villages of the Tyrol is that most of the hotels and larger chalets are family owned and have been for generations. Söll, situated in the Wild Emperor and Hohe Salve mountains is typical of a resort that combines peace and quiet, stunning views and a wide range of accommodation. Festivals and open air concerts are plentiful including the legendary Almbtrieb, a festival held in September to celebrate the cows returning from pastures. Dozens of cows are adorned with lush floral displays and large cowbells and look extremely regal as they parade through the villages.

For café life and culture, Innsbruck with its narrow streets and historic squares is the heart of the Tyrol. Take an excursion or extended stay there and see gothic and baroque buildings and the Golden Roof in the old town with its 2,738 copper tiles, completed in 1500 for Emperor Maximilian I.

### **Weather**

Temperatures in mountainous areas can be unpredictable, especially at high altitude, but in the flatter, more gentle terrain and pastureland of the central Tyrol expect high summer sun. In July and August average temperatures are around 21-24° C in the day with mornings and evenings much lower. Sun block essential, but layering for evenings when the sun has set is the way to go.

### **Festivals**

In Austria festivals are an excuse to party. Everything is celebrated from cows to dumplings and there are many opportunities to find village festivals with food stalls, dancing, and Tyrolean bands playing live music. St Johann is no exception and best known for its "knödelfest" the world's largest dumpling festival in September. Seefeld holds one of the largest flower festivals in Europe in August where local floats entered by all the hotels and businesses decorated with hundreds of flowers parade through the village. Kitzbühel holds an annual culinary and wine festival in early September. A gourmet delight of regional delicacies made by local chefs and a chance to taste Austrian wines.

### **Where to stay**

Inghams now offer 14 summer resorts in the Austrian Tyrol region. Our package holidays include flights from a range of regional airports, return transfers and a selection of accommodation with a variety of catering options to choose from. Many resorts offer the choice to extend your holidays to stay in two or three hotels in different locations.

Below is a brief guide to our resorts, further details can be found on our website resort pages:

**Alpbach** is a resort surrounded by meadows and forests and set against the beautiful backdrop of the Gratspitz peaks. This fairytale village has lost none of its 'olde worlde' charm with picturesque overhanging eaves and balconies with wonderful flowers.

**Ellmau** is a pretty village located between the rolling green hills of the Kitzbüheler Alps and the craggy Wilder Kaiser (Wild Emperor) mountains. With a strong farming history, it is still full of local character and tradition.

**Galtür** is located just 10 km from its slightly bigger sister village of Ischgl, charming Galtür lies at an altitude of 1,584 metres in the upper Paznaun Valley.

**Innsbruck** with its old town brimming with gothic and baroque buildings, amongst them the world-renowned 'Golden Roof', the cathedral, churches, museums and palaces, all bearing witness to Innsbruck's imperial past.

**Ischgl** is a peaceful Tyrolean oasis in the Paznaun Valley, in the stunning Silvretta mountains. It came under the world's spotlight in 2002 when Bill Clinton delivered his 'Message from the Mountains' speech here.

**Kitzbühel** is a famous little Tyrolean town with vibrantly coloured old buildings, cobbled streets, and medieval walled town dating back to the 16th century, offering a fascinating place to explore. It is a hub of activity in the summer with a friendly village feel and is filled with pavement cafés, designer boutiques and various local festivals, concerts and open-air events.

**Kirchberg** is situated only 6km from Kitzbühel in the heart of the Kitzbüheler Alps. You will find Kirchberg to be a pretty Tyrolean village with a cosy atmosphere, offering countless miles of valley paths and tracks. It is an ideal resort for those who enjoy gentle walking and cycling, but there is also a wide range of more challenging panoramic trails, accessed by gondola.

**Mayrhofen** is one of Austria's best loved resorts, Mayrhofen comes alive in the summer when flowers deck the balconies and the streets are filled with bustling cafés and brass band parades. It offers an unrivalled range of activities, excursions and events throughout the summer. Situated at the end of the Zillertal Valley, there is extensive walking for all levels in 4 local valleys and the 'Zillertal Natur' runs an excellent programme of FREE guided walks.

**Neustift** is a small and picturesque village set in the heart of the Stubai valley, one of the most scenic in the Tyrol. Surrounded by pine forested slopes on all sides, there are more than 50 mountain huts dotted around the hillsides, and 4 separate walking areas each with a gondola and a variety of trails, all linked by the valley bus.

**Seefeld** is situated on an open, scenic plateau above the Inn Valley just 10 miles from Innsbruck, and is a large bustling village offering something for everyone. The walking in this region is varied and suitable for all levels. Popular for its bustling atmosphere and range of activities on offer, Seefeld is a traditional Austrian village surrounded by walks and provides an excellent base to make the most of our excursion programme to explore the rest of Austria.

**St. Anton** is a fantastic resort for keen walkers wanting to explore the vast high alpine trails and peaks of the scenic Arlberg region, this famous Tyrolean village enjoys an unhurried atmosphere in summer, and is surrounded by beautiful and dramatic scenery.

**St. Johann** is a charming little market town set in the wide sunny valley close to Kitzbühel is full of Austrian traditions with a Baroque twin spire church and pretty town square filled with quaint cafés that play host to regular festivals and celebrations throughout the summer.

**Söll** village of lies in a lovely open valley between the majestic Wild Emperor and Hohe Salve mountains. Midway between Innsbruck and Salzburg, it is ideally situated for a wide range of excursions and is a well-established walking area.

**Westendorf** is an idyllic, peaceful farming village where life goes on much as it has for centuries. Lying on a sunny plateau surrounded by alpine pastures, it is an incredibly pretty area and offers extensive walking. Numerous rambles lead to all parts of the wide valley, over to Kirchberg and Kitzbühel, as well as into the Bergwelt.

### **Spas and Relaxation**

Austria has been at the forefront of the “Wellness” revolution and in the Tyrol there is no shortage of alpine retreats and spas, natural hot springs, thermal baths and mineral healing.

Kitzbühel even has a 10 kms. Kitztrail Balance Trail that goes to places to soothe your soul, such as the Paths of Silence, designed for a nature and wilderness experience and quiet time for reflection. Also in Kitzbühel, and brand new to Inghams this summer, is the luxury five star Kempinski Hotel Das Tirol – Jochberg. Our guests are offered free access to their adult spa area including, pools, steam rooms, relaxation rooms and 7 saunas and a range of treatments available (payable locally).

St. Anton am Arlberg has an excellent swimming, saunas and fitness centre with indoor and outdoor pools, Jacuzzis, whirlpools and numerous saunas of different temperatures on multi-levels, including the green roof area with a dry heat sauna and lounge.

The family-run Hotel Rieser in Pertisau set in magnificent gardens has a luxury spa comprising a 400 metre square leisure area with a natural swimming pool and indoor pool, various saunas and steam rooms with a full menu of spa treatments.

Another magnificent spa with daily activity programmes and large scenic indoor pool is at Krumers Post Hotel & Spa in Seefeld. This stylish, modern spa with a comprehensive treatments menu is ideal for relaxation after the popular four hour duration, Three Lakes Walk.

### **Food and Drink**

Bacon, cheese, cold meats or any kind of dumpling, often served in a clear soup, and served with sauerkraut are just a few Tyrolean staples. Then there are the desserts, Kiachl, a fried yeast dough pastry dusted with sugar and served with cranberry jam inside, Moosbeernocken, wild mountain blueberries in a pancake sprinkled with sugar and strudel varieties native to the region. In St. Anton there is even a cookery course where you can perfect an apple strudel or learn how to make herbal bread in the Sennhütte. On the savoury side, Tiroler Gröstl is a delicious bacon, onion and potato fry up served with a fried egg on top.

Kasspatzln is a pasta or soft egg noodle with grated cheese and oven-baked with fried onion. A typical starter will be a plate of cold meats, "Marend", dry-cured and smoked speck (bacon) local cheeses, gherkins and horseradish. And while not strictly speaking from the Tyrol, don't leave without trying Kaiserschmarrn, a shredded pancake baked in butter and stewed plums, named after Austrian Emperor Franz Joseph I. Nearly every village or town has its own local beer or micro brewery and there are many excellent wines. Many of the cosy Tyrolean inns and stubes are award winning restaurants where it is customary to end a meal with a Schnapps, usually offered by your host.

### **Things to do**

Walking in the Austrian Tyrol can be as long or short, adventurous or easy as you want. Our expanded walking and hiking programme means there are a choice of hundreds of free walks, and guided walks. Resorts particularly good for panoramic gentle walks such as lakeside promenades include Seefeld and Pertisau on Lake Achensee, the Tyrol's largest lake. For lower alpine regions the picturesque villages of Ellmau and Alpbach offer a good base. Mayrhofen in the stunning Ziller Valley has spectacular high mountain walks with 1700 km of walking paths in its four valleys. We even have our first ever yodel hiking trail in Königsleite with eight yodel stations.

What's more, many of our Tyrolean resorts offer guests a FREE resort card providing free use of transport, local and regional lifts and cable cars, hiking tours and guided walks. In addition free or reduced entrance to museums and attractions – so you can explore this wonderful region at your leisure.

Then there's Kitzbühel, home of the famous men's downhill race the Hahnenkammrennen. With 1000 km of well-marked hiking trails, 1200 of bike routes, and four gold courses it is a hive of activity in the summer. It's also close to the Austria's largest National Park Hohe Tauern where you will find some of the country's best known peaks including Austria's highest mountain the Grossglockner at 3789 metres.

Our many cycling options range from a gentle flat tour to full on mountain biking or the ease of an electric bike. Most of the resorts we feature have hundreds of kilometres of scenic marked cycle routes.

### ***Excursions***

To see more of Austria there are options for two centre holidays or many different half day or day excursions from your chosen resort. There are city breaks, to Innsbruck or the beautiful city of Salzburg.

Vintage theme outings could include trying some of Austria's steam railways or even a paddlesteamer in St. Wolfgang or Pertisau. For a taste of the Alps, one of our best scenic tours takes in the dramatic waterfalls, peaks, glaciers and alpine rivers along the Ötz valley seeing the highest waterfalls in the Tyrol and visiting Stams Basilica. Marmot lovers could visit the Hohe Tauern National Park with lunch on a mountain top.

Framed by the mountains is Austria's largest Lake Achensee, perfect for lakeside promenades, a boat or steam train trip, and to the medieval village of Rattenberg known for its crystal and many glass shops.

Crossing the border to the Bavaria town of Berchtesgaden is another option, to see Eagles Nest, once Hitler's hilltop retreat.

Please visit the resort pages of our brochure or website for details of the full range of excursions available.

*Please note that we act at all times as a selling agent for the suppliers of activities & excursions.*

### **Families**

Austria is a great destination for a family holiday and provides a range of activities to suit all ages and abilities. Some of our Austrian hotels provide facilities for children such as children pools, play areas and indoor games rooms. We are also pleased to offer **free holidays and special child prices** for children ages 2-11 for selected flights and hotels, please visit our 'Family Summer Holidays' web page to find out more.