

Vorarlberg



Vorarlberg is Austria's red hot chilli pepper – tiny but feisty. It squeezes in between Switzerland and Germany, and shakes its bootie with that ol' devil St Anton am Arlberg in Tyrol. It may have the smallest slice of the country's pie, but it's got the filling sussed: tranquil lakes, thundering rivers, forest-clad hills, snowy crags, castles and more cheese than you'll ever need for your crackers are all squashed into this western wedge.

Most people take a bite out of Bregenz first, the big daddy of the Bodensee (Lake Constance), where locals board yachts for a quick spin and skinny dip after work, gazing up at the giddy heights of the Pfänder to ponder on whether life can get much better. From here, the only way is up to the Bregenzerwald; wiggling through a mysterious land of rolling velvet hills, granite spires and villages choc-a-bloc with dairies. But up on those hills, it's not only the cheese that comes in cubes. Nudging up against woody farmhouses are the Bauhaus offspring: eco-friendly modernist houses that are revamping the landscape with straight edges, pale wood and glass walls. Stick-in-the-muds who once dissed them as overgrown Rubik's creations now stand corrected, as the province has become an architectural trailblazer with environmental credentials.

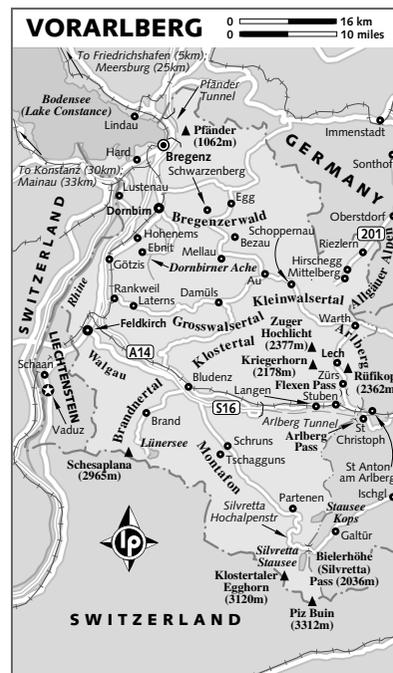
Vorarlberg also rocks in the outdoors department. To the south rise the 3000m-high giants of the Silvretta range, where a hike in the Alps affords vistas of the silver-white peak of Piz Buin. While further east, muddy boots are swapped for designer skis and salopettes in fashionable Lech and Zürs, where poseurs carve up the slopes, bask in five-star luxury and let their hair down with massive snowball fights.

HIGHLIGHTS

- Splashing in the Lake Constance and immersing yourself in modern art in **Bregenz** (p368)
- Pausing on the twisting road through the **Bregenzerwald** (p373) to nibble cheese in alpine dairies
- Swooshing down gentle slopes in **Montafon** (p378) to spy the iconic peak of Piz Buin
- Going back to the Middle Ages in the labyrinthine centre of **Feldkirch** (p374)
- Racing the filthy rich and famous on the pistes of **Lech** (p379)



■ POPULATION: 355,000 ■ AREA: 2601 SQ KM ■ HIGHEST ELEVATION: PIZ BUIN 3312M



History

Vorarlberg has been inhabited since the early Stone Age but it wasn't until the arrival of the Celts in 400 BC, followed by the Romans in around 15 BC, that lasting settlements were maintained. Brigantium, the forerunner of Bregenz, was a stronghold of the Romans until around the 5th and 6th centuries, when the raiding Germanic Alemanni tribes increased their influence and effectively took over.

The province enjoyed a peaceful existence until the early 15th century, when it suffered substantial damage during the Appenzel War with the Swiss Confederation. Relations with its neighbour later improved to such an extent that in 1918 Vorarlberg declared independence from Austria and sought union with Switzerland. The move was blocked by the Allied powers in the post-war reorganisation of Europe; fears that an even-further reduced Austria would be easily assimilated into a recovering Germany were certainly founded. Today, Vorarlberg still looks first towards its westerly neighbours, and then to the Austrian capital, Vienna, 600km to the east.

Climate

Vorarlberg is a predominantly mountainous region with an Atlantic climate, plenty of snow in winter and an above average amount of precipitation (around 2000mm per year). Its weather can differ greatly from the east of Austria; quite often it can be sunny and warm in Vorarlberg and miserable in Vienna, or the other way around.

Language

Locals speak an Alemannic dialect of German which is closer to Schwyzerdütsch (Swiss-German) than to Hochdeutsch (standard German), a lingering legacy of the Germanic Alemanni tribes who settled in Vorarlberg, Switzerland and parts of southern Germany. This strong dialect is often quite hard for native German speakers to understand; the regional tourist office has even gone so far as to produce a *Vorarlbergisch für den Urlaub* (Vorarlberg dialect for the holiday) guide which translates common words and phrases into Hochdeutsch.

Getting There & Away

Vorarlberg has no international airport; the closest is Friedrichshafen in Germany. The province is connected by rail and A14 autobahn to the rest of Austria via the 14km Arlberg tunnel which runs under the Arlberg mountains. To the west, there are plenty of border crossings into Liechtenstein and Switzerland and the main access to Germany is the A14 heading north from Bregenz.

Bodensee ferries (p370) connect Bregenz to various towns and cities in Switzerland and Germany.

Getting Around

Vorarlberg is broken down into *Domino* (individual zones) which are in turn grouped into nine transport regions; a *Regio* travel pass covering one region costs €5.60/€13.60 for one day/week while a *Maximo* pass, costing €12.20/26.10, covers the entire province. Single *Domino* tickets cost €1.20 and a day pass €2.20 – these cover city transport in Bregenz, Dornbirn, Götzis, Feldkirch, Bludenz, Lech and Schruns/Tschagguns.

Children travel for half price and seniors, people with disabilities and students receive a 30% discount. Further information, including a handy timetable booklet, is available from the **Verkehrsverbund Vorarlberg** (☎ 05522-835

77, www.vmobil.at, in German; Herrengasse 12, Feldkirch;
☎ 8am-noon & 1-5pm Mon-Fri).

BREGENZ

☎ 05574 / pop 27,000

The beauty of Bregenz is its ability to travel in space and time; it's a place where you can wake up to breakfast on the beach at Bodensee and within minutes survey the Austrian Alps from the 1064m-high Pfänder; roam the twisting cobblestone streets of the *Oberstadt* (upper town) then hit the crystalline waterfront for an avant-garde art fix; pedal through orchards hugging the shore and sample homegrown flavours in a boho café. From summertime playground to futuristic innovator, this city has a split personality. An instantly loveable one.

History

Bregenz takes its name from a Celtic tribe, the Brigantes, who settled the area before the Romans arrived. Bregenz was first documented as Brigancia in 802 and became the seat of the counts of the area. The city enjoyed a fairly peaceful life through the centuries (apart from being part of Bavaria during the Napoleonic Wars) and was crowned capital of Vorarlberg in the 20th century.

Orientation

Bregenz is spread out on the eastern shore of Bodensee with the Pfänder mountain (1064m) as a backdrop. The newer part of the city is near the waterfront, while its historical heart is 10 minutes' walk further inland. The *Bahnhof*

(train station) is a 10-minute amble east of the centre, the ferry terminal only a couple of minutes north across the railway tracks.

Information

Bregenz's new centre has a handful of banks and *Bankomat* (ATM) machines; the train station and post office also have a *Bankomat*. The tourist office has free internet access, and hands out a simple, free map of the city.

Cockpit-Café (☎ 0650-262 57 48; www.cockpit-cafe.com; Bahnhofstrasse 10; ☎ 8am-7pm Mon-Fri, 8am-6pm Sat) High-speed internet access, wi-fi, scanning and printing facilities.

Main post office (Seestrasse 5; ☎ 8am-7pm Mon-Fri, 8am-noon Sat)

Tourist office (☎ 49 59-0; www.bregenz.ws, in German; Rathausstrasse 35a; ☎ 8.30am-7pm Mon-Sat mid-Jul-mid-Aug, 8.30am-6pm Mon-Fri & 9am-noon Sat mid-Aug-early Sep, 9am-noon & 1-5pm Mon-Fri, 9am-noon Sat early Sep-Nov, 8.30am-6pm Mon-Fri, 9am-noon Sat Dec-mid-Jul) Information on the city and the surrounding area and can help with accommodation. Outside opening hours, brochures are stacked in front of the office.

Unfallkrankenhaus (☎ 4901; Josef Huter Strasse 12) Provincial hospital with emergency ward.

Sights

Set high above the lake is the *Oberstadt*, the oldest and most charming part of Bregenz with its maze of winding streets, candy-coloured houses and overgrown gardens. It is still guarded by defensive walls and the sturdy *Martinstor* (St Martin's Gate) festooned with a grotesque mummified shark. Not far past the gate is the bulbous, baroque *Martinsturm* (St Martin's Tower; ☎ 466 32; Martinsgasse; adult/child €1/0.50; ☎ 9am-6.30pm Tue-Sun Easter-mid-Oct), topped by the largest onion dome in central Europe. Take a peek at the 14th-century frescoes in the church on the ground floor before climbing up to the

small Vorarlberger Militärmuseum (military museum) for fine views over the town.

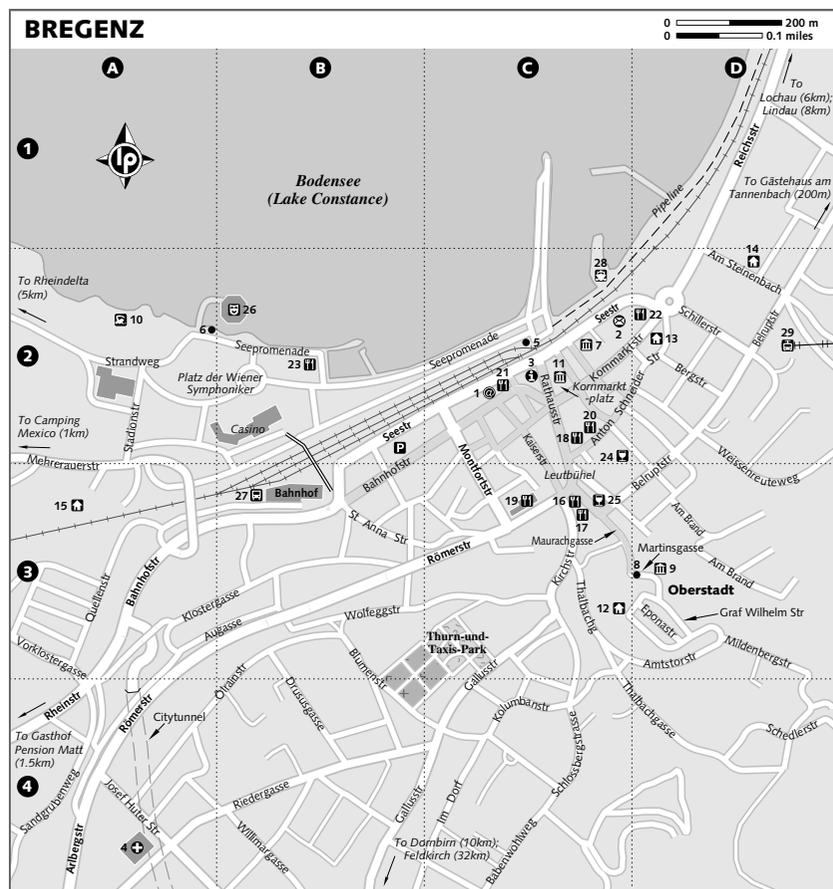
The new face of Bregenz is the *Unterstadt*, home to the *Vorarlberger Landesmuseum* (☎ 460 50; www.vlm.at, in German; Kornmarktplatz 1; adult/student €2/1; ☎ 9am-noon & 2-5pm Tue-Sun, daily during Bregenz Festival). This museum delves into the region's history, art and architecture with curiosities from Stone Age artefacts to a model Roman fort and an intricately carved *Tragorgel* (portable organ). The top floor showcases a superb collection of works by Swiss-born neoclassical artist Angelika Kauffmann (1741-1807).

Just across the way, the geometric *Kunsthaus* (☎ 485 94-0; www.kunsthau-bregenz.at; Karl-Tizian-Platz; adult/concession €10/6; ☎ 10am-8pm) pops into view. With its soaring glass-and-steel exterior and concrete interior, this is a cube that would inspire Picasso to paint. Its cutting edge design is supposed to look like a lamp (use your imagination!). Flooded with natural light, the inside is stark, open-plan and perfect for rotating exhibitions of contemporary art.

Even if you can't bag tickets for the Bregenz Festival, the lakefront *Festspielhaus* (☎ 413-0; www.festspielhausbregenz.at; Platz der Wiener Symphoniker 1) is another must-see monolith. Blending concrete, tinted glass and clean lines, the striking edifice proves that creativity also comes in boxes. Jutting out onto the lake, the semi-circular Seebühne is where festival performances take place.

Activities

Everybody who arrives in Bregenz is bewitched by the *Bodensee*, Europe's third-largest lake, straddling Austria, Switzerland and Germany. In summer, the lake attracts *cycling* enthusiasts to the beautiful and blissfully flat trails lining its banks (see boxed text, p370). **Fahrradverleih Bregenz** (☎ 0650-541 3000;



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BIKING BODENSEE

Perfectly suited for two-wheel adventures, the Lake Constance is ringed by the well-marked **Bodensee Radweg**. Itineraries, maps and distances are given online (www.bodensee-radweg.com). Depending on how fast you pedal, it takes around eight days to cover the entire 243km loop. Grab a bike in Bregenz and you'll soon be freewheeling through Austria, Germany and Switzerland, where landscapes change abruptly from willow-lined promenades to apple orchards, vineyards and half-moon bays framed against the backdrop of the Alps. High points of the cycling trail include:

- Refreshing with ice cream on **Lindau's** palm-fringed promenade
- Watching bullet-shaped Zeppelins fly overhead in **Friedrichshafen**
- Steaming and (legally) skinny dipping at the lakefront spa at **Meersburg**
- Wandering narrow medieval streets in **Stein-am-Rhein**
- Exploring the monastic island of **Reichenau**, a Unesco World Heritage site
- Gazing up at the Münster's filigree spires in Roman-rooted **Konstanz**
- Sniffing beautiful blooms in the botanical gardens in **Mainau**
- Watching grey herons wade in the marshes at **Rheindelta** nature reserve

am Blumenmolo; ☎ 8am-9pm May-Sep) rents quality bikes for €16.50 per day.

Other activities on the lake include **sailing** and **diving** at Lochau, 5km north of town, and **swimming**. The best place for a quick dip or a barbecue is the **Pipeline**, a stretch of pebbly beach north of Bregenz so named for the large pipeline running parallel to the lake. If you fancy sunbathing and splashing around in the buff, there is a secluded naturist beach at Hard, 5km southwest of Bregenz. Alternatively, check out the open-air pools and volleyball court at the lakeside **Strandbad** (☎ 442 42; Strandweg; adult/child €3.50/2.80; ☎ 9am-8pm mid-May-Sep).

For those who would prefer to kick back and enjoy the view, there are numerous boat companies that ferry passengers across the lake from April to mid-October. **ÖBB-Bodenseeschiffahrt Bregenz** (☎ 428 68; www.bodenseeschiffahrt.at, in German; Seestrasse 4) should be your first port of call for information on timetables and prices. Services to Konstanz peak at eight departures per day from early July to mid-September (one-way €12.40, 3¼ hours) and usually call in at Lindau, Friedrichshafen, Meersburg and Mainau.

Back on dry land, the **Pfänder** rises sharply above Bregenz and affords a breathtaking panorama of the lake and the pointy peaks of the Alps. A **cable car** (☎ 421 60-0; Steinbruchgasse 4; one-way adult/student/child €5.90/4.80/3, return €10.20/8.20/5.10; ☎ 8am-7pm) whizzes to the top.

At the summit, kids and fans of furry critters will love the **Wildpark**, a 30-minute circular trail bringing you close to deer, ibex and marmots in their near-to-natural habitat. There's also a **Greifvogelflugschau** (bird of prey show; adult/child €4.60/2.30; ☎ 11am & 2.30pm May-Sep), where feathered performers amaze with aerial feats.

Just 5km southwest of Bregenz lies the **Rheindelta** (☎ 05578-74478; Hard; www.rheindelta.com), where the River Rhine flows into the Bodensee. Comprising mossy marshes, reeds and mixed woodlands, this nature reserve is an unspoiled wilderness and a haven to more than 300 bird species including curlews, grey herons and rare black-tailed godwits.

Festivals & Events

The **Bregenz Festival**, running from late July to late August, is the city's premier cultural event. World-class operas, orchestral works and theatrical productions are performed on the Seebühne, a vast, open-air floating stage. Information and tickets (€26 to €125) are available from the **ticket centre** (☎ 407-6; www.bregenzfestspiele.com; Postfach 311, A-6901 Bregenz) about nine months before the festival.

Sleeping

On the Austrian Monopoly road, two Bregenz streets (Römerstrasse and Rheinstrasse) occupy the most expensive property squares; this is reflected in the price of accommodation. Private rooms usually offer

the best value (expect to pay around €30 per person).

If everything is fully booked, consider crossing the border to Lindau in Germany (8km away), where beds are plentiful and slightly cheaper. Lindau's **tourist office** (☎ 260 030; www.lindau.de; Ludwigstrasse 68; ☎ 9am-1pm & 2-7pm Mon-Fri, 2-7pm Sat & Sun May-Sep, 9am-1pm & 2-5pm Mon-Fri Oct-Apr) may be able to help.

Camping Mexico (☎ 732 60; www.camping-mexico.at; Hechtweg 4; campsites per adult/car/tent €5/4/4.50; ☎ May-Sep; ☎) It's hardly Acapulco, but this eco-labelled campsite by the lake is hot on environmental issues; it uses solar energy, recycles waste and serves locally sourced, organic food in the restaurant. The tree-shaded pitches are pleasant and the affable owners rent canoes from €25 per day.

Jugendgästehaus (☎ 428 67; www.jgh.at/bregenz; Mehrerauerstrasse 5; dm €19.20; ☎) Housed in a former needle factory near the lake, this HI hostel now reels backpackers in with its spacious, super-clean dorms. The excellent facilities include a café, common room and restaurant.

Gästehaus am Tannenbach (☎ 441 74; Im Gehren 1; s/d €22/44; ☎) Just north of the centre, Tannenbach is a basic but homy guesthouse with well-kept, sizeable rooms and a pretty flower garden.

Gasthof Pension Matt (☎ 717 77; www.gasthofmatt.at; Wuhraunweg 36; s/d €45/90; ☎) This family-run guesthouse 20 minutes' walk from the centre is a real find. The serene rooms, painted in zesty lemon and lime shades, have cushy beds, squeaky-clean bathrooms and wi-fi. Enjoy breakfast on the leafy terrace.

Hotel Bodensee (☎ 423 00; www.hotel-bodensee.at; Kornmarktstrasse 22; s/d €66/120; ☎) The red-brick Hotel Bodensee is as central as they come. Its comfy rooms have an old-fashioned feel with warm tones and flouncy fabrics.

Hotel Germania (☎ 427 66-0; www.hotel-germania.at; Am Steinenbach 9; s/d €98/179; ☎) On a quiet side street, this corporate hotel doesn't exactly ooze local character, but it has perks like a sauna, gym and wi-fi. Its contemporary rooms contrast chalk-white walls with parquet floors and bold prints.

our pick **Deuring-Schlössle** (☎ 478 00; www.deuring-schloesse.at; Ehre-Guta-Platz 4; s €95-155, d €210-294; ☎) Ivy creeps up the tower of this stunningly renovated castle in the *Oberstadt*. Rooms exude medieval charm with antiques and low beams, while marble bathrooms, de-

signer furnishings and wi-fi catapult you back to the 21st century. Pull up a chair beside the fire in the atmospheric restaurant (mains €20 to €30) to sample Heino Huber's cuisine using local organic ingredients like Bregenzerwald beef and Bodensee whitefish.

Eating

Many restaurants and cafés cluster along the lakefront or the narrow streets of the *Oberstadt*. In summer, little beats a picnic on the banks of the Bodensee; stock up on fresh bread, smoked fish, cheese and fruit at the **farmers' market** (Kornmarktplatz; ☎ 8am-1pm Tue & Fri).

our pick **Cafesito** (Maurachgasse 6; bagels €3-4; ☎ 7.45am-7pm Mon-Fri, 9am-4.30pm Sat) Squeeze into this tiny café for the freshest bagels and smoothies in town. Lilac-yellow walls and modern art create a funky backdrop for a light lunch or cup of fair-trade coffee. Try the famous bikini bagel or chilli hot chocolate.

Pizzeria San Giuseppe (☎ 541 68; Bahnhofstrasse 2; mains €5-9; ☎) lunch & dinner) This great little place rolls out reasonably priced pizzas that are thin and crisp. On Friday and Saturday nights, San Giuseppe doubles as a popular bar.

Gösserbrau (☎ 424 67; Anton Schneider Strasse 1; mains €5-16; ☎) 9am-1am Mon-Thu, 9am-2am Fri & Sat) Gösserbrau is an optical illusion: one side is a wood-panelled tavern serving Austrian fare and the other an ubercool bar. Both have Gösserbrau brews on tap.

Bistro Duygu (☎ 544 55; Kirchstrasse 1; mains €6-8; ☎) 10am-1am Mon-Sat, noon-9pm Sun) Locals pile into this cheery Turkish place for late-night munchies such as lentil soup, falafels and honey-drenched baklava.

Viva Cantina (☎ 422 88; Seestrasse 7; mains €8-20; ☎) 5pm-3am Tue-Sun) Not only the chillis are lively at this Mexican cantina. The hip haunt doubles as a party place after shrimp fajitas and one too many tequilas. Retreat to the palm garden in summer.

Neubeck (☎ 436 09; Anton Schneider Strasse 5; lunch €9.50, mains €20-25; ☎) lunch & dinner Tue-Sat) Crisp white linen and red leather set the scene in this sleek bistro, opening onto a shady patio. Expect fusion cuisine, from scallops with ricotta-lemon ravioli to Thai crayfish curry. The two-course menu du jour is good value.

Wirtshaus am See (☎ 422 10; Seepromenade; mains €10-20; ☎) lunch & dinner) Loved-up couples grab

a table on the lantern-lit terrace at this half-timbered villa overlooking the lake. Local specialties like Bodensee *sander filet* land on your plate.

The **GWL Shopping Centre** (Römerstrasse 2) has a Spar supermarket for self-caterers.

Drinking

A bunch of lively bars vie for your attention in Bregenz, including these favourites packed to the gunnels at weekends.

Wunderbar (☎ 477 58; Bahnhofstrasse 4; ☎ 10am-4am Mon-Sat, 2pm-1am Sun) Smooth funk plays in this boho bar with free internet access and neo-baroque touches from red velvet sofas to flickering candles. Browse the papers or sip cocktails beneath the cherubs.

Cuba (☎ 470 52; Bahnhofstrasse 9; ☎ 11am-4am Sat, 2pm-4am Sun) Glammed up with chandeliers and a sweeping staircase, this gallery-style bar attracts trendy types with Latin tunes and a top line-up of DJs.

KFL (☎ 439 71; Bergmannstrasse 6) KFL is the place to catch live jazz and jam sessions (many are free). Opening hours vary depending on the performance.

Wohnzimmer (Maurachgasse 3; ☎ 9pm-2am Wed-Sat) Clued-up locals head to this intimate den for everything from indie concerts to DJs spinning electro and punk.

Getting There & Around

Austrian Airlines fly to Altenrhein in Switzerland, the nearest airport. Friedrichshafen, in Germany, is the closest major airport served by a couple of no-frill airlines including Ryanair.

Four direct trains daily head for Munich (€39, 3½ hours) via Lindau, while trains for Konstanz (€45, 1½ to two hours) go via the Swiss shore of the lake and may be frequent, but require between one and four changes. There are four daily departures for Zürich (€30, 1¾ hours), all of which call in at St Gallen (€15, 45 minutes).

Nine trains daily depart for Innsbruck (€28, 2¾ hours), calling en route at Dornbirn (€2.30, 15 minutes), Feldkirch (€5.10, 30 minutes) and Bludenz (€10.90, one hour).

A daily bus service runs to Dornbirn (€2.30, 30 minutes) at least four times an hour; buses to Feldkirch (€5.10, two hours) depart twice hourly from Monday to Friday and hourly at weekends.

DORNBIRN & AROUND

Set against an alpine backdrop, **Dornbirn** is Vorarlberg's largest city. While its sights can't rival those in Bregenz, there's a refreshing lack of tourists. Wandering around the **Marktplatz**, you'll spot the crooked, 17th-century **Rotes Haus** (red house), which owes its beautiful blush to an unappetising mix of ox blood and bile. Next door, the slender Doric columns and free-standing Gothic belfry of **Pfarrkirche St Martin** catch your eye.

Dornbirn's biggest draw, though, are the creepy-crawlies at **Inatura** (☎ 05572-232 35; www.inatura.at; Jahngasse 9; adult/child/family €9.50/4.80/11.40; ☎ 10am-6pm). This hands-on museum is a great place for kids, who can pet (stuffed) foxes and handle (real) spiders, peer into bee and hornet nests, ogle at snakes and fish from behind glass and generally interact with nature. There's also a climbing wall and 3-D cinema.

Just 4km southeast of Dornbirn is the **Rappenlochschlucht** (Rappenloch Gorge), a dramatic ravine gouged out by the thundering Dornbirner Ache. Wooden walkways lead up to a viewpoint (10 minutes) and the turquoise Staufensee (30 minutes). If you're into posh motors, nip into the world's biggest **Rolls-Royce Museum** (☎ 05572-526 52; adult/child €8/4; ☎ 10am-6pm Apr-Oct, 10am-5pm Nov-Mar), situated at the bottom of the gorge. The hall of fame showcases royal Rollers that once belonged to the likes of Queen Elizabeth and George V.

Hohenems, 6km south of Dornbirn, was a haven for a large community of Jews in the 17th century. Their numbers dwindled in the 1860s, when Jews were eligible to live anywhere under Habsburg rule. Their legacy is explored in **Jüdisches Museum Hohenems** (☎ 739 89-0; Schweizer Strasse 5; adult/child €7/4; ☎ 10am-5pm Tue-Sun), housed in the Rosenthal villa. The Rosenthals built up a considerable textile business in the town, and part of their wealth – especially gorgeous period furniture – is on show, alongside photos, documents and religious artefacts from the long-defunct Jewish community. Huddled against a tree-lined hill just outside the town on the road to Götzis is the **Jewish cemetery**; get the key from the museum.

Getting There & Away

Dornbirn (€2.30, 15 minutes) and Hohenems (€3, 25 minutes) are on the Bregenz–Innsbruck railway line. Bus 47 departs from Dornbirn train station and passes by the Rappenloch Gorge (€1.60, 25 minutes, six daily).

VORARLBERG'S ARCHITECTURAL VISION

It's hard to believe that such a traditional province, with its cud-chewing cows, yellow cheese, stark mountains and wooden chalets, is among the most progressive places on the planet when it comes to architecture.

It all started back in the mid-1980s when a group of architects, constrained by the Austrian trade association of architects because of their ideas, split away from the pack and began calling themselves *Baukünstler* (building artists) rather than architects. They managed to gain support from the local authorities and create an environment where anything – as long as it was of high quality and cultivated craftsmanship – was possible.

Much of Vorarlberg's contemporary architecture is denoted by clean lines, sharp angles and plenty of glass and wood. And it's everywhere; private homes, bus stops, supermarkets and kindergartens all compete with hotels, restaurants and office buildings for your undivided attention. Arrive in a non-descript hamlet in the Bregenzerwald and you'll be confronted with not one but half a dozen architecturally sublime houses, or turn a corner in Bregenz or Dornbirn and out pops a building at the cutting edge of design.

Prominent buildings to look out for include Kunsthau Bregenz (p369), Inatura Dornbirn (opposite), Dornbirn's Hotel Martinspark, Lauterach's Terminal V, Silvrettahaus (p378) and Lustenau's SIE-Zentrale. For more information, pick up a copy of *architektur land vorarlberg – zeitgenössische baukunst* (modern architecture) from the provincial tourist office; it's in both German and English and has a list of architecturally modern hotels.

BREGENZERWALD

In summer, the jangle of cow bells breaks the silence in the Bregenzerwald; in winter, it's the shuffle of snowshoes and swoosh of skis. Bregenz's glorious backyard is a finely woven tapestry of velvet-green pastures, pretty villages and limestone pinnacles. After filling your lungs with fresh air in the hills and stomach with cheese in alpine dairies, snug log chalets invite you to put your feet up by the fire and relax.

The **Bregenzerwald tourist office** (☎ 05512-23 65; www.bregenzerwald.at; Impulszentrum 1135, Egg; ☎ 9am-5pm Mon-Fri, 8am-1pm weekends) provides details on the region's top attractions, including skiing (downhill and cross-country) and hiking. The **3 Täler Pass** (3-7-day pass €93/178) covers the skiing regions of Bregenzerwald, Grosses Walsertal and Lechtal. After working up an appetite on the slopes, you can dairy-hop your way along the *Käsestrasse* (see the boxed text, p374) that winds through the region.

Around 13km east of Dornbirn is the rural idyll of **Schwarzenberg** and its collection of chocolate-box chalets. The village springs to life from mid-May to September during the **Schubertiade** music festival. This celebration of Schubert's work is hugely popular, so book tickets months in advance from **Schubertiade GmbH** (☎ 05576-720 91; www.schubertiade.at; Schweizer Strasse 1, A-6845 Hohenems) and the local **tourist office** (☎ 05512-35 70; ☎ 9am-noon & 2-5pm Mon-Fri,

10am-noon weekends during festival). The village is also home to the small but rewarding **Heimat Museum** (☎ 05512-29 88; adult/child €3/1; ☎ 2-4pm Tue, Thu, Sat & Sun May-Sep, 2-4pm Tue & Sat Oct, 2-4pm during Schubertiade); this 300-year-old house displays regional arts and crafts and a handful of works by Angelika Kauffmann who had strong ties to the village.

Considering its size, Schwarzenberg has some wonderful places to sleep and eat. **Gasthof Hirschen** (☎ 05512-29 44; www.hirschenschwarzenberg.at; s/d €125/240; ☎) is an archetypal alpine chalet complete with crackling open fire, award-winning restaurant and antique-filled rooms. **Messnerstüble** (☎ 05512-20 02; Hof 19; mains €8-15; ☎ lunch & dinner) serves a fine schnitzel alongside Swiss-inspired dishes like *Röstli* (fried potatoes) in a countrified chalet.

A zigzagging road links Schwarzenberg to **Bezau**. This village makes an excellent base for exploring the area, with plenty of accommodation and a rural atmosphere. The **tourist office** (☎ 05514-22 95; Platz 39; ☎ 9am-noon & 1.30-5.30pm Mon-Fri, 9am-noon Sat) provides information on walking, paragliding and skiing. In nearby **Bizau**, test-drive the thrilling **Sommerrodelbahn** (adult/child €9.50/6.80; ☎ 9am-5pm Jun-Sep), a 1850m-long toboggan run comprising 80 hairpin bends. Further east, **Mellau** offers winter skiing and summer hiking; a **gondola** (summer one-way/return €6.80/9.40, winter day pass €29.50) rises to 1390m Alpe Rossstelle year-round.

The precipitous road continues east towards the Arlberg, passing through the peaceful villages of **Au** and **Schoppernau**. Halfway between the two is the **Diedamskopf cable car** (www.diedamskopf.at; one-way/return €10.50/14.30), which climbs to 2090m. From the summit, paragliders launch themselves into the air and walkers trundle back down the side of the mountain. Both places have tourist offices – see www.au-schoppernau.at for more details.

From Au, you have two choices: continue east to fashionable west Arlberg, or turn south and head for Bludenz. Scenically, both journeys are rewarding, passing through rugged alpine country on narrow, winding roads. About 9km along the southern route is **Damüls**, a high-alpine resort whose conical peaks attract skiers, walkers and tobogganers (the 3.5km sled run is floodlit twice weekly). Its **tourist office** (☎ 05510-62 00; ☎ 8.30am-noon & 1.30-6pm Mon-Fri) can help arrange accommodation. While you're here, climb up to the Gothic **Pfarrkirche** (admission free; ☎ daylight), with beautiful frescoes in good condition considering their age.

Getting There & Away

There are eight direct bus services daily to Bezau (€4.40, one hour) from Bregenz, but for most other destinations a change at Egg is required. A more direct travel option is from Dornbirn; Schwarzenberg (€3, 25 minutes), Bezau (€3.70, 50 minutes), Mellau (€4.40, one hour), Au (€5.80, 70 minutes) and Schoppernau (€5.80, 80 minutes) can all be reached a couple of times daily (times vary from season to season). For Damüls (€7.50, 1¼ hours), a change at Au is required.

PASS THE CHEESE

All those cows grazing on the Bregenzerwald's hillsides aren't there for nothing. Every year, their creamy silo-free milk goes into producing 4500 tons of cheese. The region's 40 cheeses include flavoursome Vorarlberger Bergkäse, nutty-sweet Emmentaler, walnuty Nussknacker and Weinkäse (ripened in red wine for three months). While you're here, try the cheesiest local speciality, *Käsknöpfle*, a take on gnocchi mixed with tangy Raskäse and topped with fried onions.

Serious fromage-ophiles should head for the Bregenzerwald **Käsestrasse** (Cheese Road), which zigzags past alpine dairy farms and independent artisans whose doors are open to hungry travellers. En route you can stop off at the Käsehaus in Andelsbuch to sample and buy cheese, the Sennschule Ingo Metzler in Egg to discover the secrets of cheesemaking, and the Bergkäserei in Schoppernau for a peek in the cheese cellar, tastings and free guided tours (5pm on Mondays). More details to help plan your dairy-hopping itinerary are available online at www.kaesestrasse.at.

FELDKIRCH

☎ 05522 / pop 29,300

Feldkirch whisks visitors back to the Middle Ages with its appealing jumble of gabled houses, chunky towers and cobbled streets that tumble down to the fast-flowing Ill River. While the town still has a firm grip on its medieval roots, a growing crop of avant-garde bars, kooky boutiques and pavement cafés give it a youthful twist.

Orientation & Information

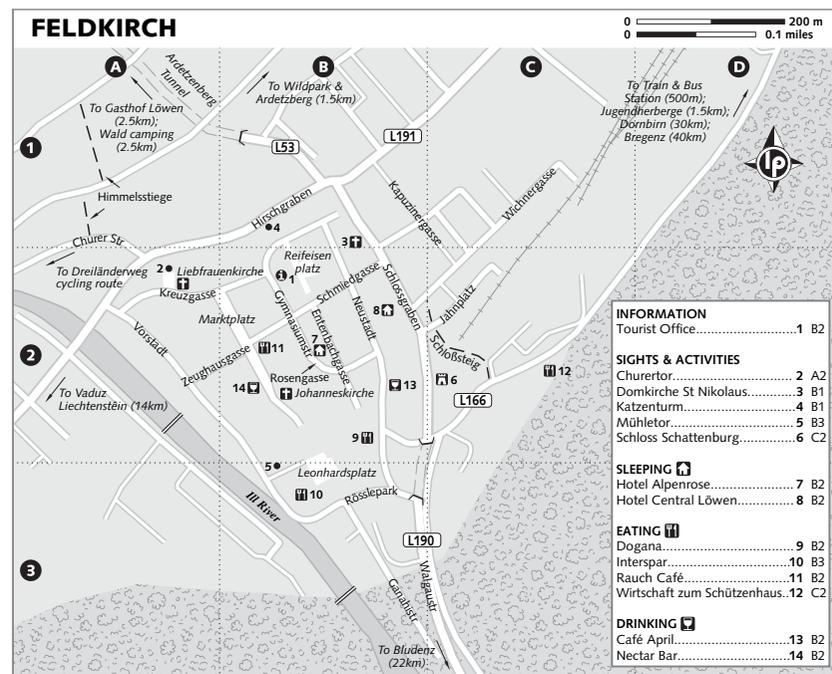
The town centre is a few minutes' walk south of the train station (turn left upon exiting); here you'll find the helpful **tourist office** (☎ 734 67; www.feldkirch.at; Schlossergasse 8; ☎ 8.30am-noon & 1.30-5.30pm Mon-Fri, 9am-noon Sat), with lots of information and maps. The post office is opposite the train station.

Sights & Activities

Part of the pleasure in Feldkirch is strolling through its narrow alleyways dotted with half-timbered houses and arcades. Patrician houses and street cafés frame the town's main artery, the cobbled **Marktplatz**, which fills with the hum of chatter in summer.

Keep an eye out for the towers surviving from the old fortifications. These include the 40m-high **Katzenturm** (Hirschgraben), where Vorarlberg's biggest bell (weighing 7500kg) still tolls; the **Mühletor** (Mühletorplatz), also known as the Sauter, where the pig market was held in the Middle Ages; and the step-gabled **Churerter** (Heiligkreuzbrücke), once the gateway to the bridge that was used to transport salt across the Ill River to Switzerland.

Domkirche St Nikolaus (Schlossgraben; admission free; ☎ daylight) has a large, forbidding interior complemented by late-Gothic features and



vibrantly coloured stained glass. The painting on the side altar is by local boy Wolf Huber (1480–1539), a leading member of the Danube school.

Rising above the town, 13th-century **Schloss Schattenburg** is classic fairytale stuff with its red turrets and creeping vines. It's a steep climb up to the ramparts, but you'll be rewarded with far-reaching views over Feldkirch's rooftops. Once the seat of the counts of Montfort, it now houses a small **museum** (☎ 719 82; Burggasse 1; adult/child €3/1; ☎ 9am-noon & 1.30-6pm May-Oct, 1-4pm Jan-Apr, closed Nov & Dec) displaying religious art, costumes and weaponry.

Facing the castle across the town is **Ardetzenberg** (631m), a heavily forested hill. At its northern end is the **Wildpark** (☎ 741 05; admission free; ☎ daylight), with a woodland trail and animal-friendly enclosures home to alpine fauna such as marmots, ibex and wild boar.

The Feldkirch region is crisscrossed with cycling trails, including the 30km **Dreiländerweg** (Three Country Trail), taking in beautiful scenery in Austria, Switzerland and Liechtenstein. Pick up the free *Feldkircher Radwegkarte* map from the tourist office. Bike

hire is available at **Gasthof Löwen** (Kohlgsasse 1) for €12 per day.

Festivals & Events

In late May, Feldkirch revisits the Middle Ages with troubadours, knights and non-stop feasting at the **Montfortmarkt**. The **Feldkirch Festival** in June draws classical music lovers to the historic venues. Other festivals include the **Gauklerfestival** in July, an enormous street party welcoming jugglers, fire eaters and clowns. Mulled wine warms up subzero temperatures at December's **Weihnachtsmarkt** (Christmas market).

Sleeping

Feldkirch offers a small but characterful selection of accommodation, including a smattering of good-value private rooms outside the centre.

Waldcamping (☎ 76001-3190; www.waldcamping.at; Stadionstrasse 9; campsites per adult/car/tent €5.60/3.90/4.80; ☎ Apr-Oct; ☎) Pine trees shade this quiet campsite. The first-rate facilities include a barbecue area, playground and free entry to the Waldbad pool with waterslides and

a volleyball court. Take bus 2 from the train station to the last stop (3.5km).

Jugendherberge (☎ 731 81; Reichsstrasse 111; dm/s/d €15.50/25.50/39; P) Set in a half-timbered barn, this is a cut above the average HI hostel, with creaking beams, a vaulted lounge and an ivy-clad courtyard. A spiral staircase twists up to light-filled dorms with pine bunks. Bus 60 trundles past.

Hotel Central Löwen (☎ 720 70; www.central-hotel-loewen.at; Schlossgraben 13; s/d €89/120; P) Modern art cheers up the spacious rooms at this centrally located hotel. Guests can use the sauna, steam bath and pool next door.

Hotel Alpenrose (☎ 721 75; www.hotel-alpenrose.net; Rosengasse 4-6; s/d €71/122; P) The rose garden, Biedermeier salon and bubblegum-pink façade of this boutique hotel appeal to hopeless romantics. There's an air of nostalgia about this 16th-century merchant's house with its wood-beamed, antique-furnished rooms.

Eating

Dogana (☎ 751 26-3; Neustadt 20; lunch €8.70, mains €18-25; ☎ 9am-1am Tue-Thu, 9am-2am Fri & Sat) Earthy tones and mellow music give this gourmet haunt a contemporary kick. The menu changes seasonally, but staples include delicious salads (try the curried *kikeriki*) and value for money lunches.

Wirtschaft zum Schützenhaus (☎ 852 90; Göfiser Strasse 2; mains €10-14; ☎ lunch & dinner Thu-Mon) *Schiessen und Geniessen* (shoot and enjoy) is the motto at this half-timbered tavern, where lederhosen-clad staff bring humungous schnitzels to the table. The tree-shaded beer garden has prime views of the castle and a pet corner with fluffy rodents to keep kids amused.

Rauch Café (☎ 763 55; Marktgasse 12-14; mains €17-23; ☎ 9am-1am Mon-Sat, 10am-1am Sun) Rauch's buzzy terrace is packed when the sun shines. If you can stomach chilli first thing, try the 'how to cure the hangover' breakfast (€12.90). The menu is Mediterranean with flavours like wild garlic gnocchi. DJs spin house music here after dark.

For self-caterers, there is an **Interspar** (Leohardsplatz) supermarket at the southern end of the town centre.

Drinking

Café April (☎ 827 13; Neustadt 39; ☎ 9am-midnight Tue-Sat, 10am-2pm Sun) Wacky touches like upside-down watering cans grab your attention

at this café. The pocket-sized terrace is a fine spot for a relaxed drink.

ourpick Nectar Bar (☎ 829 902; www.nectar-bar.at; Marktplatz 1; ☎ 4pm-2am Mon-Thu; 11am-4am Fri & Sat) Squeezed between the houses, this party place packs 'em in at the weekends. The inner courtyard gets a regular makeover – expect a Hawaiian beach in summer, and a Christmas market in winter when 'tis the season to drink hot chocolate laced with rum. The fun-loving owner Tobias stages events from iPod challenges to Mexican nights with free-flowing tequila.

Getting There & Away

Bus depart from outside Feldkirch's train station. Trains head north to Bregenz (€5.10, 30 minutes) and Dornbirn (€3.70, 20 minutes), and southeast to Bludenz (€3.70, 15 minutes).

Feldkirch is the gateway to Liechtenstein's capital, Vaduz (€2.20, 40 minutes); a change at Schaan is normally necessary. Liechtenstein has a customs union with Switzerland, so you'll pass through Swiss customs before entering Liechtenstein.

BLUDENZ

☎ 05552 / pop 14,000

Medieval Bludenz is the only town in Austria (and perhaps the world) that can lay claim to having purple cows; the Milka ones churned out from the Suchard chocolate factory. When you've managed to drag yourself away from the *Schokolade*, explore the sweet centre lined with cobblestone streets and arched passageways, the legacy of the town's heyday as the seat of the Habsburg governors from 1418 to 1806.

Orientation & Information

The town centre is on the northern bank of the Ill River. The **tourist office** (☎ 621 70; www.bludenz.at; Werdenbergerstrasse 42; ☎ 8am-noon & 2-5.30pm Mon-Fri Sep-Jun, 8am-noon & 2-5.30pm Mon-Fri, 10am-noon Sat Jul & Aug) is five minutes' walk from the train station and has free internet access.

Across the road is the town's **post office** (Werdenbergerstrasse 37), and not far east is a small pedestrian-only shopping area.

Sights & Activities

One of Bludenz's best features can't even be seen. Almost anywhere you wander in the centre, the rich, enticing aroma of chocolate will fill your nostrils. The source of these



divine smells is the **Suchard chocolate factory**; unfortunately there are no guided tours but you can stock up on chocs at its **shop** (Fohrenburgstrasse 1; ☎ 9-11.30am & 1.30-4.30pm Mon-Thu, 9-11.30am & 1.30-4pm Fri). Chocolate also plays an important part in the children's **Milka Chocolate Festival** in mid-July, when 1000kg of the stuff is up for grabs in prizes. There's also music, games and plenty of kids too full of sugar to control.

To explore the other attractions, join a free **city tour** organised by the tourist office; departing at 10am on Thursday from mid-May till October. Affording snapshot views of the mountains, the **Kirchensteig** is a covered walkway that climbs up to the Gothic parish church, **St Laurentiuskirche** (Mutterstrasse; admission free; ☎ daylight), dominated by an octagonal, onion-domed spire. The **Stadtmuseum** (☎ 636 21; Kirchgasse 9; admission €1.50; ☎ 3-5pm Mon-Sat Jun-early Sep) houses a small display on folk art and prehistoric finds.

The Austrian Alpine Club's **Kletterhalle** (☎ 626 39; Untersteinstrasse 5; €6 plus €0.80 shoe hire; ☎ 9am-5pm Mon-Fri) is an excellent climbing hall where you can practise clambering up

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boulders before tackling the real thing in the Alps.

About 1km north of the town centre, a **cable car** (☎ 627 52; Hinterplärsch; adult/child one-way €6.20/4, return €10.40/6.50; ☎ 9am-6pm Sun-Thu, 9am-10pm Fri & Sat May-Oct, 9.30am-5.30pm Sat-Thu, 9.30am-10.30pm Fri Nov-Apr) rises up to **Muttersberg** (1401m), the starting point for numerous hiking, Nordic walking and cycling trails. If you don't want to walk it, catch bus 1 from in front of the train station to the cable car station.

Bludenz is a good base for exploring the surrounding valleys. There are 15 **skiing** areas within a 30km radius and ski bus transport to/from Bludenz is sometimes included in the price of ski passes. **Walking** and **cycling** are other popular activities; the tourist office has thick booklets on summer and winter outdoor pursuits.

Sleeping

The tourist office can book accommodation. Private rooms usually offer the best value, even though a surcharge of around €3.50 per day applies for stays under three days.

Camping Seeberger (☎ 625 12; Obdorfweg 9; campsites per adult/tent €5.35/7.90; P) This leafy, well-kept campsite sits in the shadow of the Alps. Campers can relax in the whirlpool and sauna.

Landhaus Muther (☎ 657 04; Alemannenstrasse 4; s/d €35/70; P) Smothered in geraniums in summer, this homely chalet is fairly central. The rooms are old-style and simple, but fastidiously clean.

Val Blu (☎ 631 06; Haldenweg 2a; s/d €54/88; P) There's not a single wood beam or checked curtain at this ultramodern spa hotel,

defined by glass walls and smooth contours. The functional, minimalist-style rooms feature wi-fi and flat-screen TVs.

Schlosshotel (☎ 630 16-0; www.schlosshotel.cc; Schlossplatz 5; s/d €80/130; (P)) Clinging to the cliffs above Bludenz, this smart hotel shelters modern rooms with balconies. There's a terrace for warm evenings and free mountain-bike hire for guests.

Eating

Remise (☎ 342 82; Am Raiffeisenplatz; lunch €7.90, mains €6-12; ☎ 10am-1am Mon-Fri, 9am-1am Sat) This laid-back café serves up an arty atmosphere and tasty snacks from salads and toasts to curries. The cultural venue next door regularly hosts exhibitions, film screenings and concerts.

Altes Rathaus (☎ 673 00; Rathausgasse 1a; mains €8-15; ☎ 10am-1am Mon-Sat) A sleek newcomer to Bludenz, this glass-fronted café on the main drag rustles up cheese-rich specialities, steaks and yummy cakes.

Nova Bräu (☎ 685 68; Werdenbergerstrasse 53; mains €8-16; ☎ 11am-2am Mon-Thu, 11am-4am Fri & Sat, 10am-3am Sun) Copper vats gleam at this cavernous brewpub, cranking out hearty fare like *Tafelspitz* (boiled beef) washed down with Föhrenburger beer (from the brewery opposite). At the front, Arche Nova bar is a ship complete with palms and fish lights; why a nautical theme in the Alps is anyone's guess!

In the pedestrian-only area in the town centre is the Kronenhaus department store, with a **Spar** (Werdenbergerstrasse 34) supermarket.

Getting There & Away

Bludenz is on the east-west InterCity (IC) express rail route, two hours from Innsbruck (€20.70, every two hours) and 45 minutes from Bregenz (€7.50, hourly). By regional train, Bregenz-Bludenz is 70 minutes (every 30 minutes).

The east-west A14 road passes just south of the Ill River and the town centre. Buses run down all five valleys around Bludenz.

MONTAFON

pop 15,540

Silent and unspoilt, the **Montafon** (www.montafon.at) was apparently Hemingway's favourite valley and is still a fine spot for a wee adventure. Running south from Bludenz, the vale is quilted green in summer, blanketed white in winter and silhouetted by the glaciated Silvretta range year-round. All that natural

splendour doesn't go to waste: freestyle skiers and families seeking uncrowded pistes and a low-key vibe flock here, as do hikers spellbound by the craggy summits.

Walking, cycling and skiing are available along the length of Montafon. During winter, the **Montafon-Card** (3-/7-day pass €98/195) covers public transport and the 65 lifts in the valley; its summer equivalent is the **Montafon-Silvretta-Card** (€32/43).

One of the first proper resorts along the valley is family-friendly **Schruns**, which has a **tourist office** (☎ 05556-721 66; www.schruns-tschaeguns.at; Silvrettastrasse 6; ☎ 8am-6pm Mon-Fri, 9am-noon & 4-6pm Sat, 10.30am-noon Sun mid-Jun-Sep, 8am-5pm Mon-Fri Oct-mid-Jun). A much-loved hangout of Hemingway in the 1920s, **Hotel Taube** (☎ 05556-723 84; Silvrettastrasse 1; s/d €30/96; (P)) makes a good base to explore the area.

The panoramic **Silvretta Hochalpenstrasse** soon winds its way under peaks rising to well over 2500m, before climbing over the 2036m **Bielertalhöhe Pass** via a series of tight switchbacks. At the top of the pass is the **Silvretta Stausee** (2030m), an ice-cold alpine reservoir, across which the snow-capped peaks of **Piz Buin** (3312m) and **Klostertaler Egghorn** (3120m) shine brightly on a sunny day. The reservoir is the trailhead for the dramatic **Radsattel Circuit** (see p92).

A budget place to bed down at **Bielertalhöhe** is the **Madlenerhaus** (☎ 05558-42 34; www.madlenerhaus.at; dm €8-10; ☎ Dec-mid-Jan, mid-Feb-Easter, mid-Jun-Oct). This DAV (German Alpine Club) alpine hut has comfy four- to 10-bed dorms and a **restaurant** (mains €5-12) serving solid Austrian fare. For more creature comfort, check into the architecturally innovative **Silvrettahaus** (☎ 05558-42 46; s/d €43/72; (P)) or homy **Piz Buin** (☎ 05558-42 31; www.pizbuin-silvretta.at, in German; s/d €40/72; mains €8-13; (P)). Both open from late May to early November and from Christmas to April.

Getting There & Away

There are plenty of daily trains from Bludenz to Schruns (€2.30, 20 minutes), from where up to five buses daily continue onto Partenen (€3, 35 minutes) at the base of the Silvretta pass. From mid-July to mid-October, eight buses daily climb from Partenen to the Silvretta Stausee (€2.30, 35 minutes). The Silvretta Hochalpenstrasse pass is controlled by a toll road, which costs €11.50/10.50 for cars/motorcycles.

WESTERN ARLBERG

☎ 05583

With its backbone of monochrome mountains and snow-sure slopes, the Arlberg region is one of Austria's top destinations for skiing. Though it straddles Vorarlberg and Tyrol, a single ski pass covers all of its resorts (see p362).

A picture-postcard village, **Lech** (1450m) is a magnet to royalty (Princess Diana used to ski here), film stars and poseurs who like to pretend to be such from behind Gucci shades. It's also making strides as an eco-friendly ski resort (see boxed text, p72) with photovoltaic energy operating its lifts and a biomass heating plant. The terrain is well suited to intermediates, with some advanced off-piste possibilities. A cable car scales Rüfikopf (2362m), but most of the lifts and runs are on the opposite side of the valley, on the Kriegerhorn (2178m) and Zuger Hochlicht (2377m). The central **tourist office** (☎ 21 61-0; www.lech-zuers.at; ☎ 8am-6pm Mon-Sat) has bags of info on skiing and walking possibilities and an accommodation board. From July to September, it also arranges themed walks (free with the local *Gästekarte*) ranging from sunrise hikes to botanical strolls.

Six kilometres south lies **Zürs** (1716m), a smaller resort with its own **tourist office** (☎ 22 45; ☎ 9am-noon & 2-5pm Mon-Fri). The cable car runs throughout the year, but in summer the resort has all the character of a dust bowl.

One kilometre south of Zürs is the **Flexen Pass** (1773m), after which the road splits: the western fork leads to **Stuben** (1407m), the eastern one to St Anton am Arlberg in Tyrol.

Sleeping

Almost every street in Lech and Zürs is lined with hotels (many five-star), but it's still worth booking ahead in winter. Cheaper options are private rooms and holiday apartments. Expect prices to be 30% to 50% higher than those quoted here in the winter high season. Any of the following are fine bets.

Pension Alwin (☎ 309 30; pension@alwin.at; No 309; s/d €31/62; (P)) A bargain place close to the centre, this pinewood chalet features bright rooms with parquet floors. After a day on the slopes, the sauna is the perfect wind down.

Haus Nening (☎ 24 08; nening.lech@aon.at; No 149; s/d €32/64; (P)) This cheery chalet opposite Schlegelkopf lift has snug wood-panelled rooms and a garden. Bike rental and ski storage are available.

Pension Waldesruh (☎ 24 02; waldesruh@vol.at; No 144; s/d €36/66; (P)) Set back from the road, this quiet chalet offers neat and tidy rooms with balcony.

Eating

Many hotels have a fine, albeit slightly pricey, restaurant. Self-caterers can head to Spar on the main street. The following places are independent of a hotel:

Ambrosius Stübli (☎ 419 30; No 239; mains €7-16; ☎ lunch & dinner) Kick back on the sunny terrace at this traditional tavern near Rüfikopf lift; the schnitzel and *Kaiserschmarrn* (shredded pancakes) come recommended.

Hüs Nr. 8 (☎ 33 22-0; No 8; mains €8-16; ☎ lunch & dinner) *Raclette* and fondue are on the menu at this rustic chalet, with a small patio and playground.

Fux (☎ 22 25; Omesberg 587; mains €16-30; ☎ lunch & dinner) Glass walls and gold Buddhas jazz up this slick restaurant. The cuisine has an Asian twist – think Wagyu beef carpaccio and yellowfin tuna. The head-spinning wine list has 1700 bottles to pick from.

Getting There & Away

Buses run between Lech and Zürs (€1.20, seven minutes); both resorts have connections to St Anton am Arlberg (see p365). For Bludenz (€5.80, 1½ hours) and beyond, a change in Langen is required. Note also that snow occasionally blocks the Flexen Pass in winter. In summer, Lech can also be approached from the north, via the turning at Warth (1494m).

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