



Vorarlberg

Includes »

Bregenz	336
Dornbirn & Around ...	341
Bregenzerwald	342
Feldkirch	344
Bludenz	347
Montafon	349
Western Arlberg	349

Best Places to Eat

- » Deuring-Schlössle (p339)
- » April (p345)
- » Fux (p351)
- » Rauch Cafe (p347)
- » Wirthaus zur Fohrenburg (p348)

Best Places to Stay

- » Gasthof Hirschen (p343)
- » Hotel Alpenrose (p345)
- » Deuring-Schlössle (p337)
- » Posthotel Rössle (p349)
- » Hotel Gotthard (p351)

Why Go?

If much of Vorarlberg remains unknown, it's because the locals are so modest about its charms. Oh, we only have fresh air, dairy farms, plenty of forest and a few mountains to ski on, they say with a shrug. Yes, yes and double yes, you're thinking. But then the Vorarlberger are a pretty unique lot: they speak with a Swiss-Alemannic dialect (*Vorarlbergerisch*) and swing happily between ecofriendly architecture on the cutting edge of design and deeply traditional hamlets with more cows than people.

To the west lies Bregenz on the glittering expanse of Bodensee (Lake Constance), wedged between Switzerland and Germany, while to the east the glaciated peaks of Montafon and Western Arlberg attract hikers and skiers to their rugged realms. In between is the green and almost soothingly beautiful Bregenzerwald, where the welcome is as refreshing and authentic as the scenery.

When to Go

Winter blankets the Alps in snow, with downhill and cross-country skiers heading to the twinkling slopes of Montafon, Western Arlberg and the Bregenzerwald. Bodensee is at its best from May to September, when mild temperatures make it possible to swim, cycle and laze on the beach. Come in July for Bludenz' Milka chocolate festival and medieval shindigs in Feldkirch, or August for lakeside opera at the world-renowned Bregenzer Festspiele. Crowds are few and room rates low during the shoulder seasons (May to mid-June and September to mid-December).



Vorarlberg Highlights

- 1 Splash and cycle over borders on **Bodensee** (p340), Europe's third-largest lake
- 2 Eat cheese, cheese and more glorious cheese in the dairy-loaded **Bregenzerwald** (p342)
- 3 Tiptoe back to medieval times at the castles and towers in **Feldkirch** (p344)
- 4 Go to purple-cow heaven gorging on Milka chocolate in **Bludenz** (p348)
- 5 Enjoy the rugged splendour of hiking in **Montafon** (p350)
- 6 Schuss with celebrities on the slopes of **Lech** (p351)
- 7 Contemplate Angelika Kauffmann's art in the chocolate-box village of **Schwarzenberg** (p342)

History

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

Peace reigned in the province 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