



Carinthia

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Best Places to Stay

- ➔ Arcotel Moser Verdino (p265)
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Best Places to Eat

- ➔ Restaurant Maria Loretto (p266)
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Why Go?

Few regions in Europe match the rugged beauty of Carinthia, and you'll find that travelling through it is often a serpentine journey in valleys and natural conduits. Carinthia can also, at times, seem larger than life with its spectacularly high peaks; its gouged valleys and glistening lakes; the flamboyant show of opulence in the capital, Klagenfurt; and the resorts around the more famous of the region's 1270 pristine mountain lakes. The most popular of these lakes, such as the large Wörthersee, have waters warmed to a comfortable swimming temperature by thermal springs.

Carinthia's deep medieval heritage is another attraction – celebrated in picturesque walled villages such as Friesach and Gmünd, and impressive castles such as the hilltop fortress of Hochosterwitz. Many of the towns and villages nestled in Carinthia's rolling hills hold an annual summer festival, with roving performers coming from neighbouring Italy and Slovenia to take part alongside the locals.

When to Go

- ➔ Midsummer is the time to make the most of Carinthia's lakes and excellent mountain hiking. Because it gets more sunshine than elsewhere in Austria, lake temperatures are warmer.
- ➔ In winter the province morphs into one of Austria's best ski regions, despite having a shorter ski season than elsewhere due to the warmer temps.
- ➔ The shoulder-season periods are less interesting here except for valley hiking or cycling. Despite a couple of gems, the museum landscape is fairly limited in Carinthia – the activities seasons are therefore the best time to visit.

