

Achensee: climbing high above Lake Achensee, the "Sea of Tyrol"

Steep cliffs meet crystal-clear waters: travel through one of the most beautiful climbing (and hiking!) areas in Tyrol - the Lake Achensee region

Dark blue crystal-clear water dotted with little boats with dazzling white sails, and surfers who appear like little coloured specks: for many, this image is representative of the entire Achensee region, seen of course from a bird's eye perspective. And this is where the mountains come into play, creating a perfect frame for this unique lake. The "local" Rofan Mountains, towering high above Lake Achensee, have developed into one of the best climbing regions in Tyrol in recent years. And when the alternative is another prominent climbing region like the Karwendel Mountains, which are also "on the doorstep", one holiday is barely enough to explore it all...

This region really does set the standard, with approximately 250 sports climbing routes, a via ferrata and a brand new via ferrata that takes climbers across five peaks. And of course it is also one of the "founding fathers" of the new Tyrolean climbing initiative called "Climbers Paradise", which involves cooperation between all the "climbing-friendly" regions. Michael "Mike" Rutter is a man who knows this climbing area better than most. When this passionate climber, mountain guide and long-term Tirol Werbung mountain expert talks about "his" mountains he immediately begins to wax lyrical:

"Sporting challenges in a unique natural setting – this is what makes climbing special. The limestone cliffs here in Rofan occasionally resemble famous climbing areas in southern France – and yet this area is unique: peaks often have two faces, being gentle and green on one side but steep and sheer on the other. This presents a real challenge for climbers. The views of Lake Achensee, which provides perfect cool refreshment after a strenuous climb, are unique. Everyone can find their own favourite climbing area here: the range of climbing facilities extends from new climbing parks which provide kids with the perfect introduction to the sport, to more than 100 climbing routes, right through to the two via ferrata that we have at present. Numerous Alpine huts are perfect locations for taking a break and "talking shop" with fellow climbers: all climbers will receive a warm welcome in the Dalfazalm, Erfurter Hütte, Berggasthof Rofan, Mauritz Alm and Almstüberl huts and lodges.

Large festival to celebrate the new Achensee 5-peak via ferrata

To commemorate the 50th anniversary of the Maurach mountain rescue service, a very special "gift" is being presented to all climbers. Exclusive to Austria, a new 5-peak via ferrata is being created in conjunction with the mountain guides Stefan Wierer, Robert Span and Mike Rutter. It will cover the Haidachstellwand, Roskopf, Spieljoch, Seekarlspitze and Hochiss peaks. Two sections were completed last autumn, and on 2 and 3 July 2010 the impressive new via ferrata (one of the longest in Austria, approx. 2 km in length) will be officially opened with a large festival on the mountain. Climbers do not have to conquer the via ferrata "in one go" – they can climb off after every peak; and of course there are also additional emergency escape routes.

There are extra events connected to mountains and hiking around Lake Achensee right throughout the summer:

The 10th annual **24-hour hike** will take place on 26 and 27 June 2010 at Lake Achensee: 100 entrants will be hiking from 7am through to 7am the next day and will cover 60 kilometres around Lake Achensee.

The second running of the "new" **Karwendel March** will take place in August, following on from the success of last year's event. The second march after a 19 year break will once again have "hiking in harmony with nature" as its theme. Alongside the staff of Karwendel Alpine Park, the Tyrolean organic farmers will once again be active partners when the keen hikers set off through the Karwendel Mountains at 6am on 28 August.

First-hand information: "Kletterfolder" climbing brochure

The current "Kletterfolder" climbing brochure is available in all information offices and contains plenty of first-hand information about climbing. This handy brochure provides useful information about the two mountain ranges, individual routes and climbing parks, as well as important safety tips and contact details for regional mountain guides.

There are also detailed listings of climbing activities in this region at www.climbers-paradise.com. Of course, local "insiders" are the people to go to for the best tips. They are especially valuable in an area in which new climbing facilities are introduced almost every season. Where can you find them? Climbing a rock face of course, or on their way there, or having a break in one of the cosy lodges...

For further information

You can get information about the region and its villages from:

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Photo archive

You can download printable photos from www.achensee-fotoarchiv.at

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