



## SIMPLY HIKING IN SAALFELDEN LEOGANG

**From the mountains to the Steinernes Meer: making the most of the region's trails and climbing routes**

Hiking can be simply magical. Beyond the sporting challenge, exercise in the fresh air is linked to a host of sensory experiences and also contributes to physical and mental well-being. In Saalfelden Leogang, there are numerous hiking and running trails affording impressive views of the Steinernes Meer plateau and the Leoganger Steinberge mountains. For your next hiking tour, take advantage of our "pole-sharing" programme. Along the way, take time to pause briefly and enjoy the silence of nature on a wrought-iron forest swing. Alternatively, take a load off at the Naturkino or TONspur rest & relaxation islands on the Asitz. No matter the time of year, pure musical enjoyment is available in the open air. There's no better place than the Asitz mountain, also called the "Mountain of Senses," for families to discover the world together with all their senses. The 'senses park' and the guided themed walks are available for this purpose. And for those who want to travel up a bit higher, there are climbing routes and via ferratas in all degrees of difficulty and two climbing halls.

### **"simply hiking:" featuring pole sharing, forest swings and plenty of peace and quiet**

In Saalfelden Leogang, the motto is "simply hiking" and, as the name suggests, it's no more complicated than this! There's nothing to this concept beyond just exercising in the fresh air. After all, it has been scientifically demonstrated that spending time in the great outdoors has a positive effect on health. "We want to avoid distractions and focus on what matters," says Marco Pointner, Managing Director of Saalfelden Leogang Tourism. "We want to encourage our guests to just start walking, to enjoy nature and to have fun. The focus is on hiking, pure and simple, as well as the ability to switch off from the concerns of everyday life." After all, the health benefits of hiking have been documented in countless studies. Dr. Arnulf Hartl from the Paracelsus Private Medical University in Salzburg, Austria, says: "It has been proven that hiking has positive effects on respiratory diseases, back problems and many other common ailments. We need nature. It's in our genes." In the Saalfelden Leogang region, hiking is in itself an experience. Here, smartphones stay where they belong: in the backpack or in the trouser pocket. This time around, instead of just admiring beautiful nature photos on your mobile phone, take the time to really enjoy the variety-rich trails and tours. This will allow you to experience nature up close and in a deeply relaxed manner. In addition to taking a relaxing time out in nature, the region's practical infrastructure provides comfortable opportunities to rest along the way. The 360-degree wooden benches made by local craftsmen are a great example. So too are the wrought-iron forest swings. While relaxing on the swing and listening to the sounds of the forest, hikers can gaze up into the treetops and the sky. In contrast to a conventional bench, the 360-degree benches and forest swings allow visitors to change their perspective and discover many of the otherwise inconspicuous things in nature. After taking a break, simply continue hiking once your batteries are refreshed. The Saalfelden Leogang region is also making efforts in terms of sustainability. For example, there are now dedicated "pole-sharing stations," i.e. natural wooden poles can be borrowed at the starting points of each trail and then returned back to their designated holders at the end of the hiking trail. For those keen to head out with their very own hiking pole, they are also available for purchase at the tourism association.

### **Carefree hiking from place to place and without luggage**

On longer hiking trips, it's not uncommon to need a bit more luggage. The result, however, is that the backpack becomes larger and heavier. To ensure that hiking remains a great source of pleasure for the entire length of the journey, there is now a practical luggage transport service in Saalfelden Leogang. Hikers can set off with just a light daypack, while the larger piece of luggage is transported ahead to the next stage location in the meantime. To take advantage of this "hiking without luggage" service, the Saalachtaler Höhenweg and Saalachtaler Rundweg trails are available. The scenic Saalachtaler Höhenweg trail can be hiked within five days. Six nights, including luggage transfer, a hiking map and a hiking equipment kit (consisting of hiking pin, hiking pole, and hiking socks) are included. In addition, one ticket each for the cable car and downhill summer toboggan run are included. This fantastic offer is available from 616 EUR per person. The Saalachtal Rundweg between Saalfelden, Maishofen and Maria Alm can be explored within three or six days. Included in the package are four or seven nights in the desired category (depending on whether you choose the shorter or longer variant), the luggage transfer, and the hiking equipment. This offer is bookable from 278 EUR per person. A ticket for the journey up the mountain with the Huggenberg chairlift is also included. The respective offers are bookable from the end of May until the beginning of October by visiting: <https://www.saalfelden-leogang.com/en/region-experience/hiking/hiking-without-luggage>

### **Contrast-rich climbing opportunities in the Steinberge mountain sports region**

Climbing fans should look no further than the Saalfelden Leogang holiday region, which features over 1,000 climbing routes and Alpine multi-pitches for beginners, advanced and experienced climbers. The Steinberge mountain-sports region boasts the Loferer and Leoganger Steinberge mountain ranges, the Pillerseetal valley, the Saalachtal valley in Salzburg and the Steinplatte mountain. With 45 rope lengths, the "Pinzgawurm" is one of the longest climbing routes in the Northern Limestone Alps. Beyond the climbing routes, this mountain sports region boasts five climbing halls and twelve exciting via ferrata routes. At the "Felsenfest" climbing hall, one of the most modern and largest climbing gyms in Austria, Alpine climbers can hone their skills in the 1,700 square metre climbing area. The somewhat smaller and more laid-back PES climbing hall Leogang features an additional 50 m2 bouldering room. In contrast to outdoor climbing facilities, indoor climbing halls have one major advantage: they offer pure climbing pleasure at any time of year and can also be used in poor weather. Those keen to try out climbing for the first time should take advantage of the various climbing offers from May to November - also for families. A summer climbing tour can be combined with a stop at a traditional Alpine hut. Hearty and sweet delicacies await in the Passauerhütte, Riemannhaus and Peter-Wiechenthaler-Hütte mountain huts, among others. In addition, you can enjoy breathtaking views from the mountain hut terraces.

### **Nature Cinema and TONspur islands for nature fans and culture lovers on the Asitz mountain**

Experience nature and sharpen your senses - it's all possible on the Asitz mountain in Leogang. As of last summer, you can now enjoy the special relaxation area Nature Cinema with panoramic views at the top of the Sonnkogel mountain on the Asitz. This viewpoint area boasts long-ranging scenic views. The backdrop for the show is provided by the Leoganger Steinberge mountain range and the Steinernes Meer plateau. "Sit down, relax and take a break from everyday life" is the motto of the special relaxation area where visitors can enjoy relaxation islands and reflect on the here and now in special hammocks. In addition to pure relaxation, take in the impressive views of the Leoganger Steinberge mountain range and the Steinernes Meer plateau. Hikers can reach this special place via the Asitzbahn or Steinbergbahn gondola lifts, or via Leo's Spiewanderweg and the Grosser Asitz mountain.

The five new TONspur islands that have been built along the hiking trail between the mountain station and the Asitz summit are yet another great attraction. They consist of wooden loungers that invite guests to linger and offer the opportunity to experience nature. At the five stations, visitors can listen to live recordings of the TONspur concerts from the previous year. Four of the five islands were specifically placed to face each cardinal direction. The fifth island is located in a quiet place in the middle of the forest. The wooden loungers were even mounted on rails and equipped with an appropriate sound system. The right way to set them up depends upon the prevailing weather conditions: to enjoy the sun, the loungers can be pulled out of the covered station by means of rollers, in bad weather the canopy protects against moisture. During construction, visual details and a good sense for the surrounding nature were equally important. As a result,

it was possible to create a year-round experience for nature lovers. Depending on the weather, the concert is accessible in the open air or under the protection of the wooden structure, even in winter! This means 365 days a year of pure music enjoyment in nature. The effort involved in this concept was worth it: in 2020 the TONspuren Islands were even awarded the MAECENAS Austrian Art Sponsorship Prize.

### **Family outing to the "Mountain of Senses:" Sinne Erlebnispark adventure park and "Silent Waters on the Asitz mountain"**

The Asitz is also home to a sensory park featuring 30 adventure stations, making it ideal for an adventurous outing with the whole family. At the middle station of the Leoganger Bergbahnen, immerse yourself in a world of senses. Here, sight, hearing, taste, smell and touch are put to the test. A walk without shoes through the soft Alpine landscape provides a soothing massage for the soles of your feet. Along the way, visitors perceive the scent of numerous wild herbs and Alpine plants. In addition, listening to the sounds of the forest helps sharpen the sense of hearing. By means of singing bowls, one can also feel the sound waves. At the sensory park, children can also engage in creative activities such as baking a flatbread, painting and crafting, or designing their own t-shirt.

"Silent water" at the Asitz mountain features lounging chairs, panoramic terraces, Keipp area and a swimming platform in the Speichersee reservoir invite guests to relax and enjoy the view. These oases of well-being above the Sinne Erlebnis adventure park are just the thing to bring your body and mind into harmony with nature. The "Mountain of Senses" is accessible via the Asitz and Steinbergbahn gondola lifts.

### **When you feel like action: summer tobogganing and Flying Fox XXL zip line**

You don't necessarily need winter and snow to zip down the mountain in no time flat! In Saalfelden Leogang, there are two summer toboggan runs that provide plenty of action. The 1.6-kilometre summer toboggan run on Saalfelden's Biberg mountain includes varied curves, jumps and a phenomenal view of the Saalfelden basin. Meanwhile, the "LeoKlang" summer toboggan run at an altitude of 1,800 metres is a special experience for families. From the mountain station, descend about 400 metres downhill through the Pinzgau mountain world. And for adrenaline junkies, one of the longest and fastest steel rope slides in the world awaits! At speeds of up to 130 kilometres per hour, float seemingly weightlessly through the air head first for 1,600 metres. In addition to the unforgettable adventure you'll experience during takeoff, there's a fabulous view of the Salzburg mountain landscape to boot! This year, the Flying Fox XXL will celebrate its tenth anniversary with a variety of competitions and special promotions. The Alpaca Trekking Tours on which you can explore the area with the shaggy animals are another excursion tip for families.

### **Get to know the myths of the forest during guided themed hikes and forest bathing**

Green, imposing and endless - forests have their own special appeal. They not only tell stories, but also harbour an extraordinary atmosphere. As part of the summer adventure programme, guests can discover the forests of the Saalfelden Leogang region in various ways. Forest bathing and weekly guided themed hikes are two great examples. Medicinal plant, torch-light or special beaver hikes are also available here.

"Einatmen. Wald spüren. Ausatmen" (inhale, sense the forest, exhale) is the ideal offer for the entire family. It includes a seven-night stay, the Saalfelden Leogang Card, two hikes, and a TEM (Traditional European Medicine) herbal workshop. A hiking map and hiking socks are also included. With the bed and breakfast option, the offer starts from 289 EUR, or 598 EUR for the \*\*\*\*Hotel with half-board option.

### **Hiking with kids and pram: magical places, great adventures and lots of fun**

It is no secret that hiking is one of the most popular summer sports. Exercise in the fresh air and heading uphill and downhill with one goal in mind: carefree hiking. Behind every hike, however, there is also a great adventure for the little ones. The Saalfelden Leogang holiday region features several hiking routes and paths that are also suitable for families with prams and small children. The not-too steep hike to the Sinnlehenalm mountain hut, for example, at an altitude of 950 metres, is easy to tackle with little effort. Once up top at the hut, enjoy a hearty Alpine snack and a magnificent view over Leogang and the Leoganger Steinberge mountain range. Hiking tours over gentle slopes, through forests and meadows and along streams are ideal for toddlers keen to fulfil their urges to move and discover. Hikers can explore the species-rich nature along the hiking

trails to the Seealm, Sinnlehenalm, Örgenbauernalm or Steinalm mountain huts. In the process, encounter the mysterious Birnbachloch water cave, for example, or other valuable natural treasures of the region.

### **A contrast-rich route network for trail runners, Nordic walkers, joggers and beginner runners**

In the Saalfelden Leogang sports region, there is a suitable route for every runner. With short, medium and longer distances, and some featuring few or plenty of metres of elevation gain, there are 22 running and Nordic walking routes to choose from in total. For endurance athletes, it's the ideal place to combine physical fitness, performance and ambition. For trail runners, the focus is usually on the experience and freedom of discovering new trails in the midst of nature. Additionally, the entire musculoskeletal system and the ability to react become conditioned, as the trail goes over hill and dale, as well as along many forest and meadow paths. Beginner runners should visit the two fitness courses in Saalfelden Leogang. Ten strengthening, stretching and mobilisation exercises help promote dexterity and balance, thus making the first running experience an unforgettable success.

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#### **Information for the media:**

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