**A SAFARI WITH A DIFFERENCE: FIVE THINGS YOU REALLY SHOULD DO IN THE INNSBRUCK REGION THIS WINTER**

**When you think of a safari, you probably think of Africa and sighting the “Big Five”. But what about a safari with a difference? This winter, the Innsbruck region will offer five unique things to see, discover and experience – from skiing under the stars or travelling through time at a Victorian Christmas market, to a magnificent carnival event that is only held every five years. In the Innsbruck region, “safari” means unique experiences – and plenty of good reasons to get out and about.**

**1. Fun on the slopes: nighttime skiing on the Patscherkofel**

Perfectly groomed pistes, a variety of downhill runs and a magnificent mountain backdrop – in conditions like these, you’d love to spend every free minute of your winter holiday skiing. And, if the days aren’t long enough for you, the Innsbruck region lets you extend the fun on the slopes until (well) after sunset. Several ski resorts around the capital of Tyrol offer evening or even night skiing on selected days: as an example, you can ski on the Heiligwasserwiese on the Patscherkofel mountain every Tuesday and Thursday until 6.30 pm. The floodlit slopes above the city’s sea of lights, under a starry sky, make for a particularly enjoyable and unique experience.

Top tip: direct access to the pistes from your hotel room is possible in Kühtai, Austria’s highest winter sports resort. Numerous accommodation providers are located in the immediate vicinity of the lifts, ensuring a straightforward ski-in ski-out procedure – even for nighttime skiers.

**2. Nature experience: tobogganing on the Rangger Köpfl**

Tobogganing always means wonderful winter fun, whether you are alone, with family or with friends. The leisurely ascent lets you appreciate the tranquillity and beauty of the surrounding snow-covered landscape – then, on the way down, enjoy the speed and the thrills. Experience it for yourself up on the Rangger Köpfl: at over eight kilometres in length, the toboggan run down the mountainside is one of the region’s longest – a delight for young and old alike. As a break from the action, you can also treat yourself to a local speciality or two at the Rosskogel hut or the Sulzstich and Stiglreith restaurants.

Top tip: the unspoilt nature of the Simmeringalm is ideal for snowshoe excursions, which will also open up magnificent panoramic views over the Mieming Plateau.

**3. City experience: a walk through the park of Ambras Castle**

Ambras Castle towers majestically over the city of Innsbruck, and its large park is worth a visit at any time of year. In winter, however, when the snow covers this imposing Renaissance building and its surroundings, it appears in a very special and romantic light. As you stroll through the grounds, you pass rocks, gorges and bridges – and, with a bit of luck, you might even meet the Castle’s popular peacocks, whose dazzling plumage adds a striking splash of colour to the park’s snow-dusted paths.

Top tip: you can even enjoy a city experience in the mountains – in Innsbruck, up on the Seegrube, this entirely possible. The cable car whisks you straight from the city centre up to an altitude of some 2,000 metres, where Innsbruck’s highest sun terrace, Cloud9, awaits.

**4. Christmas spirit: a stroll through the region’s Christmas markets**

Every year, during the Advent season, the city is transformed into a fascinating winter wonderland – not least thanks to the many Christmas markets, whose festive lighting, charming melodies, seductive scents and abundant treats appeal to all the senses. The markets, each with a different theme and programme, can be found all over the city. The days leading up to Christmas are also celebrated in festive style in certain neighbouring localities – for example in Telfs where, for the first time, a Victorian-style Christmas market is to be held. Appropriately enough, the new musical “Scrooge”, based upon Charles Dickens’s famous tale, “A Christmas Carol”, will be performed in the town hall.

Top tip: locals and visitors get in the mood for the upcoming festive season in the village of Igls on 23 December each year with a big Christmas procession. The Christ Child, Mary and Joseph, accompanied by numerous angels, shepherds and animals, all parade through the village.

**5. Cultural event: the Telfs “Schleicherlaufen” procession**

Magnificently decorated hats topped with elaborate designs, colourful costumes, all kinds of dances, lots of music and wild characters – this and more besides can be seen and heard at the Telfs *Schleicherlaufen* [“sneaky dash”], a carnival parade that has taken place in this market town every five years since 1890, offering an unmissable spectacle for onlookers from both near and far. On Sunday, 2 February 2025, the event will come round again: the 500 or so participants will once more walk, dance and even sneak through Telfs to put the town into a rare state of ferment. Not for nothing has this custom been included on the UNESCO List of Intangible Cultural Heritage.

Top tip: extraordinary performances of a completely different kind can also be experienced at the Innsbruck Winter Dance Festival, with dance theatre and various side events to be seen from 30 January to 2 March 2025.

**Bonus: sustainable mobility**

Buses, trains and trams are a straightforward and environmentally friendly way to get around the Innsbruck region – for winter holidays too. But that’s not all: in the case of the “Waldbahn” or “forest tram” (tramline no. 6), which stops near Ambras Castle on its route between Innsbruck and Igls, it’s the journey itself that is part of the adventure. Incidentally, the Welcome Card is the best way to travel: this free guest card, available from partner establishments for stays of two nights or more, not only includes a range of leisure activities, but also free use of all public transport in the Innsbruck region.

***About Innsbruck Tourismus***

*Innsbruck Tourismus is the official destination management organisation for the Innsbruck region, encompassing the capital of Tyrol and over 40 localities in the surrounding area, from the Inntal valley to the Mieming Plateau via Kühtai and as far as the Sellraintal valley. With almost 3.5 million overnight stays (as of 2019), the Innsbruck region is one of Austria’s largest tourism institutions – a unique symbiosis of pulsating urban space and fascinating Alpine world. The vibrant city atmosphere and sightseeing highlights are just a stone’s throw from your next biking or hiking tour, your next ski adventure or winter walk. The Welcome Card, free for visitors, is the key to the region’s boundless opportunities: public transport, usable at no cost, means that the area’s numerous highlights can be enjoyed both sustainably and comfortably. Visitor enjoyment is the focus of the thoughts and actions of each of the organisation’s 90 or so staff: they pass on their passion and enthusiasm for this alpine-urban space to guests, ensuring unforgettable holiday experiences for all in harmony with both people and nature. With a total of twelve tourist information offices, Innsbruck Tourismus can stay close to visitors, be right in the action and keep a finger on the pulse of events – a true hub for the authentic stories and personal impressions of local characters that can be found on the popular* [*blog*](about:blank) *and social media channels at #myinnsbruck.*

***Further links***

*Blog:* [*www.innsbruck.info/blog*](http://www.innsbruck.info/blog%20)

*Facebook:* [*www.facebook.com/Innsbruck*](http://www.facebook.com/Innsbruck)

*Instagram:* [*www.instagram.com/innsbrucktourism*](http://www.instagram.com/innsbrucktourism)

*Twitter:* [*twitter.com/InnsbruckTVB*](https://twitter.com/InnsbruckTVB)

*YouTube:* [*https://www.youtube.com/user/InnsbruckTVB*](https://www.youtube.com/user/InnsbruckTVB)

*Pinterest:* [*www.pinterest.at/innsbrucktvb/\_created*](http://www.pinterest.at/innsbrucktvb/_created)

**Enquiries**:

Innsbruck Tourismus

Andreas Reiter

Market Management

Burggraben 3, A-6020 Innsbruck, Austria

+43 512 5356

[a.reiter@innsbruck.info](mailto:a.reiter@innsbruck.info)

[www.innsbruck.info](http://www.innsbruck.info)

Free photo downloads at:

[www.innsbruckphoto.at](http://www.innsbruckphoto.at)

[www.en.innsbruck.newsroom.pr](http://www.en.innsbruck.newsroom.pr)