

Winter adventures with animals in Austria

Feel the fluffy fur of alpacas, watch dogs play in the snow, or head on a winter hike together with donkeys. Animal experiences are a great way to enjoy winter both away from the slopes and the crowds. Unsurprisingly therefore, they increase in popularity by the year. Luckily, Austria has plenty of options for animal lovers. Many bigger winter resorts offer experiences like horse-drawn carriage tours. However, there's a lot more to discover! If you are looking for some off-the-beaten-path winter activities to be combined with classic skiing trips – or enjoyed on their own – have a look at our tips below!

Snowshoe hiking with dogs

Time well spent with man's best friend on snowshoe hikes in Vorarlberg's Kleinwalsertal Valley.

Most dogs love winter and enjoy romping around in the powdery snow. If you fancy joining them, a guided snowshoe hike in Kleinwalsertal might be just what you are looking for. All tours are accompanied by an experienced dog trainer and a hiking guide. The snowshoe hike to the Hörnle Pass takes approximately four hours and is suitable for beginners. Hikers looking for a multiple day adventure might want to book packages with overnight stays or daily snowshoe tours from experts like "Hundewelt Kleinwalsertal."

Read more:

www.kleinwalsertal.com/en/Search-and-book/Travelshop/Winter_experiences/Husky-Camp
www.hundewandertouren.at (German only)

Hiking with alpacas and lanterns

Head on a twilight hike with alpacas in Tirol's Pitztal Valley every Thursday.

Cute alpacas win our hearts in no time. Some especially friendly ones can be found in Jerzens in the Tirolean Pitztal. Every Thursday at 4:30 PM, they head out on winter hikes together with children and adults. For roughly an hour, both humans and animals walk through the snow at dusk, using lanterns to guide the way. Participants aged ten or over are allowed to lead their own alpacas. At the end of the tour, warming mulled wine and alcohol-free children's punch awaits. The tour lasts around one and a half hours in total.

Read more: www.pitztal.com/de/winter/aktivitaeten/alpaka-wanderung-in-tirol (German only)

Husky adventures and sledge rides

The Haberl family and their 12 huskies in Styria offer hikes and adventure days with sledge rides.

About five years ago, Andrea and Dietmar Haberl discovered their love for huskies. Now they live on a farm called "Husky Haberl" and have 12 of them. The couple has specialised in hikes and sledge or waggon rides with their dogs. When out on a tour, every participant is connected to one husky by a mushing belt at the hips. Together, human and animal discover the landscapes at a comfortable pace. The tour also helps to get to know the huskies better.

A full husky adventure day includes a husky sledge ride, a husky hike and culinary breaks in between. Andrea and Dietmar Haberl also welcome visitors who simply want to become a bit more familiar with huskies. Dog lovers can stay for an hour or town, pet the huskies, and experience their natural pack behaviour.

Read more: <https://husky-haberl.at> (German only)

Winter tours in horse-drawn carriages

A horse-drawn carriage ride is one of the most romantic winter activities possible. Try it in Mittersill, SalzburgerLand.

Georg Steger from the Reiterbauer farm in Mittersill loves to take guests on a tour through the winter landscape. He offers rides in a horse-drawn carriage as well as a horse-drawn sledge. While horses pull the vehicle at a leisurely pace, passengers can sit back comfortably, relax, and enjoy their natural surroundings while listening to stories from the area and anecdotes. Blankets ensure nobody has to freeze. Several tours are available to choose from. The one-hour standard excursion and the two-hour "Original Pinzgauer Kutschengaudi" are the most popular. The latter one includes a welcome glass of schnapps plus snacks. On request, Georg Steger organises bespoke trips tailored to individual wishes, e.g., moonlight excursions.

Read more: www.mittersill.info/en/infrastructure/mittersill-pferdekutschen-fahrten.html

A paradise for horseback riding

The Mühlviertler Alm region in Upper Austria features a 700-kilometre-long network of paths for riders.

Gently undulating hills, forests and wide plains characterise the landscape on the Mühlviertler Alm in the north-eastern part of the Mühlviertel in Upper Austria. For many years, the region has specialised in offering horseback riding. The network of horse trekking trails at altitudes between 500 and 1,000 metres now covers an impressive area of 700 kilometres. About 50 horse riding stables and lodgings are available to take a break and stay overnight. Several riding stables offer tours and winter riding weekends or weeks – perfect for anyone wanting to try out horseback riding in the colder months.

Read more: www.muehlviertel-almfreistadt.at (German only)
www.pferdereich.at (German only)

Hiking tours with donkeys

Explore Lower Austria's Wachau on winter hikes together with donkeys.

Donkey trainer Anita Brunner's offers tours together with her ten animals in Emmersdorf in the Wachau, including in winter. Groups of six or more can choose between four hikes, ranging from the one-hour taster tour to the longer "Holistic Donkeys" tour, a great chance to experience the relaxing effects of donkey hiking. A word of introduction by Anita Brunner: "Donkeys are not more stubborn than horses. They just give you more time to think about what you did wrong."

Read more: www.eselabenteuer.com (German only)
<https://www.donau.com/en/the-danube-in-lower-austria/>

If you are interested in covering winter in Austria in line with a commission, we will happily assist you in mapping out your press trip.

For any inquiries, questions, additional information, and images, please get in touch at pressuk@austria.info.

Austrian National Tourist Office UK

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