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YEAR AFTER YEAR: ATMOSPHERIC CHRISTMAS TIME IN INNSBRUCK

When the whole city gleams in festive brilliance, sweet melodies ring out from all around and the alleyways are filled with tempting aromas, the festive season has unmistakably begun in Innsbruck. Once again the Alpine capital will be showcasing its fascinating winter wonderland; the city's charming Christmas markets, in particular, providing a festive ambience with their stalls and specialities – especially the one in Innsbruck's old town, which is celebrating its 50th anniversary this year.

For half a century now, visitors from far and wide have flocked to Innsbruck's old town to experience the magic of its Christmas market and get into the festive mood. For many it has long represented a fixed point on the winter calendar, a kind of anchor that can provide a sense of stability and security, especially in turbulent times. As with the six other Christmas markets across the city, this one recommends leaving the tedium of everyday life behind for a few hours and diving into a fantasy world that should be enjoyed with all the senses.

On the trail of the past: 50 years of the Old Town Christmas Market

This traditional Christmas market in the heart of the city never fails to delight, and this anniversary year is no exception. Encircled by the splendid facades of medieval houses, with the famous Golden Roof in the background, around 70 exquisite market stalls offer a range of art, handicrafts and all kinds of special treasures. Then there are culinary classics, such as Kiachl (fried dough pastries), chestnuts and other delicacies, alongside a spicy punch or hot mug of Glühwein (mulled wine) to provide some much needed refreshment – the irresistible scents that fill your nose on a stroll down the historic alleyways alone are enough to tempt you on to the next (spontaneous) gastronomic pit stop. Meanwhile, the perfect musical accompaniment is provided by the Amraser Turmbläser, a group of brass musicians, who fill the air with their atmospheric Christmas carols just in time for dusk each day. And lastly, since it just wouldn't be Christmas without one, Innsbruck's highest and most famous Christmas tree can also be found at the old town market. It towers resplendently over the stalls and, thanks to its magnificent decorations, is visible from far away. For a good dose of festive cheer, the Christmas market in Innsbruck's old town will not disappoint - open this year from 15th November until 23rd December.

“Once upon a time...” Legendary adventures in Märchengasse

A visit to the Christmas market in the old town is a wonderful experience for children too. Little eyes (and the not-so-little) will shine with delight upon encountering the larger-than-life figures peering down at them from the facades and window ledges of the buildings of Märchengasse, or “Fairy Tale Alley”. Besides several well-known heroes and heroines, there will be a few new faces to discover this year, including Rapunzel, Mother Holle and Pinocchio. In addition, a character or two are brought to life on Theaterwagen stage with performances of popular fairy tales whisking onlookers off twice a day to the world of the Brothers Grimm. Anyone still thirsty for more fantastic stories can then take a detour into the Riesengasse, or “Giant Alley”, which, as its name suggests, is guarded by giants!

Explore the endless variety of Innsbruck's Christmas markets

As special as it is, however, Innsbruck's Christmas in the Mountains involves more than just the traditional old town Christmas market – there are actually a further six markets at various locations across the city featuring their own special range of specialities and highlights. The Christmas market at Marktplatz (15.11–23.12.2023), for example, is geared particularly to families, with its story times, puppet theatre and nostalgic merry-go-round. The Christmas market on Innsbruck's main shopping street, Maria-Theresien-Strasse (25.11.2023–6.1.2024), on the other hand, has a slightly more

u n l i m i t e d

modern vibe – here glass, light and crystal dominate, displayed in the form of gigantic Christmas baubles and impressively illuminated trees, among other things. Awards for the best views go to both the Christmas market up on the Hungerburg (24.11.2023–6.1.2024) and the “Kaiser Christmas” at Bergisel (17.11–23.12.2023), which alongside exquisite handicrafts and tasty treats, each boast spectacular panoramas of the festively illuminated city. Things are a little more serene at the smaller but nevertheless charming markets in the districts of St. Nikolaus (24.11–23.12.2023) and Wilten (27.11–23.12.2023). The first promises contemplative times of “days gone by”, while the market in Wilten puts on an exceptional cultural programme. Whatever you feel like doing though, the seven Christmas markets in Innsbruck will fulfil all your Christmas dreams.

Any further information on the individual markets and their opening hours are available at www.christkindlmarkt.cc

Tip: LUMAGICA Innsbruck – an enlightening journey through the Imperial Gardens

Aside from the Christmas markets, the capital of Tyrol has a whole lot more to offer in the run-up to Christmas too. The Imperial Gardens, or “Hofgarten”, for example, situated not far from the old town Christmas market, will host another winter highlight (literally) for all to explore: the magical LUMAGICA light park, which will be returning to the Alpine metropolis this year for the fourth time in a row. Following last year’s enlightening “Journey Around The World”, this year visitors will be taken on a magical “Journey Through Time”. The more than one kilometre-long circular path through the gardens will once again be lined by a number of extraordinary light sculptures, ranging from abstract elements and interactive installations to animals and mythical creatures. LUMAGICA Innsbruck can be experienced from 18.11.2023 until 28.1.2024.

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](#) and social media channels at [#myinnsbruck](#).

Further links

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