

## 8 Reasons to Spend Autumn in Austria

Hiking, biking, and relaxing by the lake define summer, while winter brings skiing and festive Christmas markets. But what about the months in between? Often overlooked by holidaymakers, autumn is actually one of the best times to visit Austria. Just picture yourself taking a walk through the colourful landscapes or mingling with the locals at centuries-old festivities. As a bonus, autumn's off-peak season often means travellers can enjoy it all with some excellent money-saving deals.

Still not fully convinced? Read on for more reasons to spend autumn in Austria!

### 1. Indian summer in the Austrian Alps is spectacular

What part of the world comes first to mind when talking about Indian Summer? Chances are, it's North America. However, autumn is just as stunning in the Austrian Alps. Late September and October are when the leaves turn colour and the landscapes look their most picturesque. Add the mild temperatures and mostly clear skies and it's hard to imagine a more perfect time to visit. Plus, depending on country of origin, for many holidaymakers it's a shorter trip.

### 2. It's the perfect season for hiking and biking adventures

Yes, you can hike and bike in Austria all-year round (literally, there's winter hiking and fat biking in the snowy months!). But autumn truly is among the best times. Think comfortable temperatures, colourful surroundings and less busy trails. The options are nearly endless: Hikers can head on the [legendary Streif in Kitzbühel](#), explore the [High Mountain Nature Park Zillertal Alps](#) on foot, or, if up for a challenge, opt for the three-day [Arlberg Trail](#), connecting the five villages of Lech, Zürs, Stuben, St. Anton and St. Christoph. [St. Johann in Tirol](#) is a go-to place for family hiking. Mountain biking is equally popular with [Paznaun-Ischgl](#) and [Schladming-Dachstein](#) (with its designated Bikepark) among the frontrunners.

### 3. Watch cattle drive - a one-of-a-kind spectacle

Alpine transhumance has shaped Austria's mountain regions for thousands of years: Cows spend the summer grazing on pastures at higher elevations, and when the temperatures drop, they're led back down to the valley. The latter is an annual spectacle, known as "Almabtrieb". On the day of the event, cattle, sheep, and goats leave their summer home and are paraded through the villages, wearing flowery headdresses and bells around their necks. There's also usually music, regional food, and dancing to mark the homecoming. Cattle drives happen throughout the country, but some of the most popular places to watch them are [Hintensee in the Salzkammergut](#), [Wildschönau in Tirol](#) and [Fügen-Kaltenbach in](#)

[Tirol's Zillertal](#). Prefer horses? An experience like no other is the [descent of the world-famous Lippizanners in Piber](#) near Graz.

#### 4. It's "Sturm" time

Sturm, literally “storm”, is one of the most popular beverages in Austria only available during the harvest season. It's a partially fermented juice with a low alcohol percentage, made from local grapes, and available in white, red and rosé. The fermentation process creates the signature sweet and slightly acidic taste. Sturm is best enjoyed in vineyards, known as “Heurige”, throughout Austria, e.g. along the [Styrian Wien Roads](#). City trippers get their share too as [Vienna](#) is the only major town in the world with significant wine growing (and lots of wine taverns). Blend right in with the locals by adhering to their drinking etiquette: Hold your glass in the left hand (and cutlery in the right), say “Mahlzeit!” (“Enjoy your meal!”) instead of “Prost!” (“Cheers!”) when toasting, then take a sip without clinking glasses.

#### 5. Harvest festivals and game weeks

September and October are generally great months to indulge in local delights. City or countryside, and [Vienna](#) to [SalzburgerLand](#), there's always a harvest festival going on somewhere. And, unsurprisingly, celebrating agriculture means there's tons of foods and drinks to try. Expect producers selling their products right on site, lots of food stalls dishing up all the regional favourites, and live music. It's also very common to see the locals dressed up in dirndls and lederhosen gathering for some traditional dances.

Another autumn favourite are the game weeks in October and November, with many restaurants offering special menus, think venison ragout, roasted wild boar, or deer dish.

#### 6. There are tons of events in the Alps

In Austria, we're ending summer with a big hooray, so get ready for a fun-packed event schedule: Paznaun-Ischgl welcomes the autumn season with its [Golden Summit](#) series, think sports competitions, concerts, and food experiences. In Zell am See-Kaprun, [Tones of Autumn](#) features the region's own version of the Oktoberfest, hikes, city tours, a kids festival, and more. Yogis will flock to St. Anton am Arlberg for the [Mountain Yoga Festival](#) in September, while Zillertal is the place to be for trailrunning fans, with the [Mayrhofen Ultraks](#) taking them up to 101 km through the region. Love food? St. Johann in Tirol hosts its annual [Dumpling Festival](#), where 26,000 dumplings made from 27 recipes are served on a 595-m-long table, while Kitzbühel hosts the [KITZ Kulinarik x Piemont](#), a joint event of producers and chefs from both regions.

## 7. It's a great time for city trips

City trips during the peak of summer are doable, no doubt. Especially when it's a destination like [Innsbruck where cable cars take you right up the mountains from the centre](#) for a cooling break (and stunning vistas). Or [Graz](#) with its easy access to the [South Styrian Wine Road](#). But the autumn months have their very own charm: They're a little cooler, making sightseeing easier and more enjoyable. Plus, there's the benefit of shorter queues at the most popular attractions. Movie fans might want to head to Vienna in October, when the [Viennale](#), one of Europe's top film festivals, takes place.

## 8. Off-peak hotel deals as a money saving hack

Peak season is over, which means guests with some flexibility can bag great deals or stay , including at some of Austria's top hotels: [Nesslerhof](#) in Großarl offers 5 nights for the price of 4 with full board and spa access on selected days in autumn (from € 950). At [Krallerhof](#) in Leogang, one child up until 14 stays for free when booking 5 nights or more, full board and spa included (from € 1,485). And [Hotel Feuerberg](#) in Carinthia has a "Colourful Family Autumn" package for 3-7 nights, including full board, spa, and activities (price upon request). City tripper? [Hotel Sans Souci Vienna](#) has a special "Artsy Autumn" package including a tour through its private Roy Lichtenstein collection and museum tickets (from € 528).