

ADLERWEG, update Mar21

Tirol Werbung (Tyrolean Tourist Board), who oversee the Adlerweg, have made significant changes to the waymarked route. This includes major changes in the Brandenberger Alps and the Rofan range (completely new stages 5 and 6) and above Lechtal where the Lechtaler Alps high level route (stages A17–A24) is now regarded as the main route while the original route (stages 19–22) through Lechtal and over Valluga is no longer classed as part of the Adlerweg. The high-level route itself has changed slightly at both ends (stages A20 and A24) and has been diverted to finish on the summit of the Arlberg pass rather than in St Anton am Arlberg. The overall effect of these changes has been to make the route a more challenging walk, though still one for walkers with neither climbing skills nor equipment required. The full walk will now take about two days longer than before. It is of course still possible to follow the route described in the guide which is waymarked with perfectly good local signposts rather than as part of the Adlerweg.

*Over the ten years since the guide was researched there have been changes to the facilities provided and opening hours in some refuges. In addition the opening periods of some of the cable cars and chairlifts have changed. An appendix to this update summarises available accommodation details that were correct in 2019 before the coronavirus pandemic began. (note; this list does not include the large variety of accommodation available in the towns of St Johann, Kufstein, Maurach, Pertisau, Innsbruck, Igls, Leutasch, Ehrwald, Lermoos and St Anton where you should contact the local tourist offices). It is not known what effect the pandemic will have. During summer 2021 it is expected that **all** accommodation will require pre-booking and contact should be made at least five days before anticipated arrival. If it is open, capacity is likely to be limited (50%?) so sleeping spaces will be in short supply! The DAV (German Alpine club), whose members manage the majority of the refuges, are expecting huts to open in summer 2021 and are taking bookings via the Alpine hut central reservation system (see below) with the following provisos:*

- Only visit refuges when you are in good health!
- Obligatory reservation, no accommodation without a reservation!
- Bring your own PPE, it is obligatory to carry a face mask!
- You must provide your own duvet cover and sheet sleeping bag. Refuges will provide duvets for use in these covers. Your own sleeping bag is not permitted. Blankets, pillows and towels will not be provided. (This rule differs between accommodation with some requiring sleeping bags and others banning them, check on the providers website or by 'phone).
- Maintain 1.5m distancing at all times with people not in your own family bubble.
- If capacity is limited by regulations, a 'hygiene surcharge' may be applied to overnight fees.
- If government restrictions prevent opening, full refunds will be given.

Introduction

p19–20 When the guide was written, most alpine club refuges would not accept bookings except from groups. Walk-in overnights were welcome and the refuges had a policy of not turning any-one away with spare mattresses available to occupy any vacant corner of the building. This policy has been steadily altering over the past ten years driven by both the growth of the internet and by customer demand for greater certainty. The majority of huts now encourage pre-booking and have some have set-up on-line systems to handle this.

In 2020, the joint Alpine clubs of Austria (OeAV), Germany (DAV), Switzerland (SAC) and South Tirol (AVS) took this trend further by establishing a central reservation system for Alpine refuges. This is a voluntary organisation and not all AV refuges have joined, although it is expected the numbers in the system will grow. The system will also be open to private refuges and mountain hotels/guesthouses, though few have joined so far. The aim is that 90% of beds will be available for central booking with only 10% held back for walk-in clients, although this will differ from hut to hut. You can use the system without joining to check availability (it displays 'number of beds available per day') and plan your schedule. You join the system by making your first reservation (you cannot join in advance), but once you are in the system you can use the one site to make multiple bookings for your walk. Payment is made by credit/debit card. Some huts ask for a 10% booking deposit and specify a cancellation cut-off for free cancellation (usually five days before your stay). Member refuges will not accept direct bookings, so you need to check refuge web-sites to see if they are members and what conditions they impose. As of Mar21, nine refuges on the Adlerweg had joined the central booking system; Gaudeamushütte (stage 1), Gruttenhütte (stage 2), Bayreutherhütte (stage U6), Karwendelhaus (stage 10), Hallerangerhaus (stage 11), Pfeishütte (stage 12), Württembergerhaus (stage A20), Memmingerhütte (stage A21) and Stuttgarterhütte (stage 21). Two more, Falkenhütte (stage 9) and Anhalterhütte (stage 18), are currently closed for long-term building work and may be members when they re-open. Full details at www.alpenverein.de/huetten-wege-touren/huetteninfo

Due to Coronavirus restrictions, it is anticipated reservations will be required for all overnight stays in alpine club and private refuges, guest houses and hotels during summer 2021, with no walk-ins allowed. Refuges are expected to operate at 50% of available capacity.

Stage 2

Although it is classified as black, the difficult ascent through the Klamml gorge from Gaudeamushütte to Gruttenhütte is now regarded as the main Adlerweg route. Both the alternative route via Gruttenweg to Gruttenhütte and the original route, which by-passes Gruttenhütte altogether, are still available if you wish to avoid the Klamml.

p57 From **Gaudeamushütte** head NNW (sp Gruttenhütte über Klamml) across meadows, on a path that crosses a river washout (often dry by mid-summer) and ascends through scrub towards the col R of Gruttenkopf. This narrow path gains height as it ascends a valley through dwarf conifers and scrub with the Hausbach stream L. Cross the stream in a narrow defile to enter Klamml gorge and fork R after 50m. There are two tracks through the gorge, with a one-way system for up and down journeys. (*The section through the gorge is aided by fixed cables, bolted hand/fooholds and a three metre ladder*). Above the gorge, join the Gruttenweg trail to soon reach **Gruttenhütte** (1620m).

Follow the 4wd track that sweeps downhill W from the refuge (*This is part of the Wilder Kaiser Steig (WKS) which is followed as far as Steiner Hochalm. It is waymarked with yellow paint flashes*). After 1.2km fork R (sp Hintersteinersee), leaving the 4wd track but staying on the WKS. The track undulates gently through dwarf conifers and trees, re-joining the original route round the base of Treffauer.

The stage has been extended along the side of Hintersteinersee lake to end at the hamlet of Schiesti.

p60 Pass a carpark L and turn L opposite gasthof **Seestüberl** to reach the lakeside. Cross Hintersteiner Seebach stream and follow a path winding through woods. Turn sharply R at first path junction and continue on the path, now rising slightly above the lake. Emerge into a meadow and turn R past houses R. Fork R back into woods and follow the Seespitz track parallel with the lakeshore R.

Continue beyond the end of the lake and turn R through meadows to reach **Pension Maier** (24beds (24b/0d), refreshments, tel 05358 8203, www.pension-maier.at) in **Schiesti** (931m).

Stage 3

The stage now starts from Schiesti at the W end of Hintersteinersee.

p61 From **Schiesti**, follow a gravel 4wd track N past a car park and follow this ascending around two hairpin bends. Continue uphill between forest R and meadow L then re-enter forest. Emerge in the corner of a forest clearing at Holzenalm. Go ahead at a track junction, back into forest and follow the track climbing again round two more hairpins. At the next track junction, turn sharply L to re-join original route round three more hairpins to reach high alpine meadows and the little settlement of **Stofflalm**.

p63 The ancient **Kaiserlift** has been refurbished and modernised. It is still a single-seat chairlift, one of only ten in Austria, but nowadays it has padded seats and modern safety systems.

Stage 4

*The descent from **Hundsalmjoch**, which was previously unsigned, has been waymarked on a different route to that in the guide.*

p71 The route now leaves NW from the summit then turns W to wind downhill through forest to re-join the original route at a gate on the 4wd track in the valley below.

Stage 5

This stage was previously a very easy valley walk. It has been re-routed over three summits and is now classified as black. It is 4km longer than the original route and now ends at Pinegg rather than at the Kaiserhaus.

p73 After heading downhill through meadows with the Hasaltalgraben stream R, bear R at the end of the meadows across the stream into forest. After 250m, turn sharply L (1103m), re-crossing the stream and follow a track ascending into the forest (*the original route continues ahead here*). After 500m, turn R over a stile onto a forest path, continuing to ascend. Emerge into meadows and turn L at crossing of tracks to reach a gravel road. Bear R, following this road around a hairpin bend to a collection of farms at **Nachberg Hochleger** (1480m).

By the first farm, turn L onto a field track, descending slightly through meadows. Emerge on a gravel road and turn L. After 75m, turn L on a path through meadows and pass a roadhead R. (*A low-level alternative route turns R here, see below*) Continue ahead and turn R into trees at the next turning. Turn L at a junction of paths and bear L again to reach **Ascherjöch** (1458m) with Blessenberg mountain rising ahead.

The path begins to climb, gently at first through meadows, past turning R that leads downhill to Aschaalm. Continue into forest, then follow a very steep and rocky path with four cable aided sections, eventually reaching the summit of **Blessenberg** (1743m).

Follow path along the summit ridge, forking R and descending to Heubergsattel saddle with Heuberg summit rising L. Turn sharply R at the next junction and ascend through pine forest to **Kienberg** summit (1786m).

Path now descends steeply into forest, then winds downhill to reach an isolated farm at **Einkehralm** (1446m). Follow a 4wd track ascending slightly through Einkehrboden forest then descending to a farm at **Heubrandalm** (1346m).

Turn sharply L and immediately R to pass beside farm buildings then continue ahead for 100m and turn R past two more buildings. Immediately after last building, fork L and follow a 4wd track winding

through woods to reach a T-junction (*The low-level alternative route re-joins here*). Turn L on gravel road and follow this downhill round three hairpin bends. Turn sharply R and follow a track past **Arzberg** farm (1079m) and continue past **Trama** farm. Bear L into forest and follow a path steeply downhill to reach an asphalt road in **Pinegg** (677m) (*bus to Brixlegg*) where the stage ends. Turn L and after 300m you will find Gasthof Gwercherwirt (*16beds (16b/0d), refreshments, tel 05331 5213, www.gwercherwirt.com*).

Between Ascherjoch and Einkehralm the route is graded black where it crosses the summits of Blessenberg, Heuberg and Kienberg. This section can be avoided by following a low-level alternative route that passes N of the mountains following a 4wd track from just before Ascherjoch via Aschaalm and Krumbachalm to re-join the main route near Heubrandalm.

Stage 6

The stage now starts from Pinegg and follows a different route all the way to Steinberg am Rofan. The new stage is 5km longer and is classified red.

p76 From the road junction in **Pinegg** follow the main road N and bear L on a bridge over the river Brandenberger Ache. Continue over the river Steinberger Ache then after 75m turn sharply R on a path beside house 60. Follow this climbing through forest, then turn R on a gravel 4wd forestry track. Continue around a hairpin bend then turn sharply L at the first junction of tracks and sharply R at the second. After 600m, turn sharply L on Jagersteig forest path which contours through the forest then descends slightly to reach beginning of **Aschau** village (890m) (*Gasthof Jodlerwirt refreshments, shop, bus to Brixlegg*).

Turn R on asphalt road around a hairpin bend and continue through village to **Haaser** (918m) (*Gasthof Haaser 9beds (9b/0d), refreshments, tel 05331 5512 closed Wed, www.gasthof-hasser.tirol*).

Just before the Gasthof fork R on a gravel road, then continue into forest and turn L at T-junction of tracks. Follow this steeply up the Burgstallgraben valley, eventually crossing the Burgstaller Bach stream. Turn R at the next T-junction and after 50m fork L on a forest path. Go ahead over a track crossing, then bear R to follow a grassy track around meadows keeping close to the forest edge R. Join an asphalt road by **Brandl** farm (1143m) and keep L to reach **Wimm** farm (1170m).

Turn sharply L in front of the farm and R at the next junction over a cattle grid. After 120m, fork L on a forest path and follow this climbing steeply through forest to emerge in alpine meadows at Wimmerjoch (1335m). (*Wimmerjoch ridge is the highest point of the stage*) Bear L to reach a track and follow this along the ridge. Where this track ends, bear half L on a grassy track and re-enter the forest at the SW corner of the meadow. Continue to reach a forestry track and turn L around a hairpin bend. After 150m, turn R off the track onto a path winding downhill through the forest. Follow this curving R around a hairpin into a meadow and pass an isolated hut at **Lahnalm** (1134m).

Bear L around the hut and follow a grassy path N along the edge of a meadow with forest R. Continue into the forest and emerge on a forestry track. Turn L, then after 150m fork R on a track winding through forest. Turn R at a T-junction and descend steeply around three hairpins. After the third hairpin, continue for 250m then turn sharply L on a forest path descending into the Weissenbachgraben gorge. Cross the Weissenbach river on a footbridge and turn R.

Follow the path uphill through forest and emerge in a meadow. Continue on grassy path along the meadow side, with forest L, to reach a track in the far corner of the meadow. Follow this track into the forest then pass under an electricity supply line and bear L in the cleared area beneath this line. After 200m, follow track bearing R into forest, descending to reach an asphalt road on the apex of a hairpin bend. (*Bear L at the bend to reach after 300m **Enterhof** farm (accommodation 1 double bedroom, tel 05248 259 enterhof@aon.at)*).

Bear R and continue steeply downhill to cross the Steinberger Ache river (889m). Fork R, climbing at first parallel with the Mühlbach river L then crossing this river to continue on the other bank. Cross the Moosbach stream and turn R on a track back across the Mühlbach and into forest. Turn L at a T-junction of tracks onto Hinterbergweg and follow this ascending steadily to reach an asphalt road. Turn L to reach beginning of **Vordersteinberg** (1043m).

Just before a cattle grid, fork R on a gravel track uphill into forest. Keep R at the first fork and L at the second across the Häusbach stream onto Bärenwaldweg (*Bärenwaldweg is a popular footpath with extensive views S over Steinberg am Rofan to the mountains beyond. There are occasional benches and picnic tables*). Follow this, winding downhill in and out of the forest, to reach Mühlegger Bach stream. Just before a ford, turn L over a footbridge then L again to re-join the track and follow this downhill to **Unterberg** (1000m) (*Waldhäusl inn, accommodation/refreshments, 10beds 10b/0d, tel 05248 206, info@daswaldhaeusl.at, bus to Achenkirk*).

Stage 7

The stage has been re-routed slightly at the start to pass through Steinberg am Rofan.

p80 From Waldhäusl inn in **Unterberg**, follow Guffertseite SE then go ahead at crossroads. Pass **Steinberg am Rofan** L and continue to reach village community centre L with parish church behind. Turn R, then after 300m turn L between fields. Bear R and where road turns L into a new housing development, continue ahead on footpath. Follow this winding through woods and descending to cross the Mühlbach stream. Turn R at a road junction and follow an asphalt road over the Steinberger Ache river (879m). After 150m, turn R onto a path (Steinberger Loch Steig) into woods. Follow this winding steeply uphill to reach an asphalt road and turn R. Pass **Durrahof** farm (*limited accommodation, tel 05248 258, durrahof@aon.com*) L, where the asphalt ends, and continue ahead on a good 4wd track, re-joining original route.

Stage 17

The chairlift that runs from the Grubigsteinbahn middle station at Brettalm up to Grubigalm now only operates in winter. As a result it is necessary either to walk to Grubigalm or to take the cable car second stage up to the Grubighütte (2028m) and walk down to Grubigalm from there.

p156 From **Brettalm** cable car middle station (1338m) follow a 4wd track uphill under the winter-only chairlift. Continue through forest then after 700m turn sharply R on a path into the trees. This path winds uphill through the forest, cutting off a series of wide hairpin bends negotiated by the 4wd track, to reach the chair-lift top station at **Grubigalm** (1712m) (*refreshments*) and re-join the original route.

Alternatively take the second stage of the Grubigsteinbahn cable car from **Brettalm** (1338m) to the top station at **Grubighütte** (2050m) (*private, 24beds (24b/0d), 05673 21026, end-May to mid-October, www.gipfelhaus.at*) then follow a 4wd access road winding downhill to **Grubigalm** (1712m) (*refreshments*) where the original route is re-joined.

p158 The stage has been extended to include stage A17 (p190 in the Lechtaler Höhenweg section) and now ends at Loreahütte.

Stages 18–23

The route through Lechtal is no longer waymarked as part of the Adlerweg and has been replaced by the Lechtaler Höhenweg high level route over the Lechtaler Alps. This is described in stages A18–A24, with a slight change to A20 where it passes Dremelspitz and a complete re-routing of A24 to end at the summit of the Arlberg pass rather than in St Anton.

Stage A20

The route now passes E of Dremelspitz through Hinteres Dremelscharte.

p197 When you reach the choice of routes to Steinseehütte, fork L for Hinteres Dremelscharte and cross a bridge over Angerlebach stream. The path starts ascending steeply through tussock grass and dwarf conifers and passes a turning L for Galtseitenjoch. The going becomes rockier as height is gained, with talus and scree replacing grass after 2100m altitude is reached. The gradient eases at 2250m and a seasonal snow-melt lake is passed L. After 2350m the path steepens again passing through a debris filled gully with cable assistance as it climbs between Dremelspitze R and Hanauerspitze L to **Hinteres Dremelscharte** notch (2470m). From the notch, descend steeply over scree slopes to reach the shore of Steinsee lake, then continue gently over tussock grass, re-joining the original route to reach **Steinseehütte** (2061m).

Stage A24

Beyond Leutkircherhütte, the stage has been completely re-routed to pass high above St Anton and end at the summit of the Arlberg pass.

p210 From Leutkircherhütte, follow path SW, descending slightly across a rocky saddle to **Almajurjoch** (2237m) and continue ahead past a hunting lodge L. After 250m, fork L at a path junction and ascend steadily to another junction where a path L descends to the Kapall cable car and St Anton. Keep R ahead, climbing steeply on a zig-zag path to reach a col (2477m) below Bacher-Spitz which rises R.

Descend steeply for 750m to reach a low point (2342m) then start ascending steadily across the scree slopes below Weiss Schroten-Spitz R. Pass a path junction L and continue climbing to reach **Mattunjoch** (2545m). Follow path ahead for 400m across a high saddle, where patches of snow can remain all year, to reach **Valfagehrjoch** col (2543m).

Continue ahead and follow the path downhill through a desolate barren man-made landscape of ski-tows, chairlifts and reservoirs for snow making equipment. Head towards a communications tower that can be seen ahead, aiming to pass to the R of it. A short distance past this tower is **Ulmerhütte** (2285m) (DAV 52beds 52b/0d, refreshments, mid-July to mid-September, tel 05446 30200, www.ulmerhuetten.at).

Continue on a good 4wd track heading SE through wide alpine pastures and follow this downhill, forking L after 250m. Continue until you pass above a reservoir R and fork R to reach a junction of tracks at Arlensattel (2057m).

Turn R on a narrow path that winds gently uphill to **Galzig** (2153m) where there are three chairlift stations above the path L. Continue under the St Christoph chairlift and follow the path, now winding downhill, past a TV transmission mast L to reach **Galzibahn** cable car station (2082m) (refreshments). (If you wish to go directly to St Anton you can use the Galzibahn cable car)

Turn R on a vehicular track and follow this downhill round a series of hairpin bends. After the eighth bend, turn sharply R on a narrow path. Where this ends, turn R at a T-junction and pass to R of the Arlberg Thaja restaurant (1793m) on the edge of **St Christoph am Arlberg** (accommodation, refreshments, bus to St Anton). Continue on a winding path then fork L and after 500m emerge on the main road over the **Arlbergpass** opposite the summit carpark (1793m) (refreshments). (There are regular buses from St Christoph which take 12mins to reach St Anton).