

Day 8 - 16th September

Walking Innsbruck's mountains

After a wonderful breakfast of cereal, smoked salmon and apple cake we walk through Innsbruck and as we have visited a couple of times before and seen the sights, we decide to go on a long walk (13.7 miles in the end!) up the Nordkette wall of mountains. It is an excellent walk, with good footpaths, forest tracks with a steep climb for the first few hours up to Planotzenhof (good stop for drinks) to a wonderful 1777 chapel with a painted apse recently restored at Hottinger Bild at a height of 2969 feet or 905 metres.



Hafelekar Peak

Then we walk across the forest to Gramart taking in Gasthof Frau Hitt for a drink and snack break, and then on the Katzenbrundel Weg to the Nordkette cable way. We started to climb to Seegrube but thought better of it thankfully, and took the two cable cars up to Seegrube (which has a restaurant for some more snacks) and finally to Hafelekar.

We highly recommend taking the cable car to the top station at 7,400 foot, as at Hafelekar you have an easy 15 minute walk to the summit, from where you have fantastic views to more summits, gorges and primeval forests beyond. We spent

around 2 hours walking to the many viewpoints, benches (some of which were more sheltered) and information boards which explained about the geology, Karwendel nature reserve with the forests, and stone eagles and golden eagles in the vicinity.

Nature

We also enjoyed the shrill calls of the black birds that were gliding around the crags, and sometimes landing in the summit viewing areas.

We felt that the attractions and time to allow at the top summit had not been sufficiently explained in the brochure. We had very good weather at the summit but even so we recommend taking a fleece or jacket and gloves.

Austrian cuisine

On our return our ears popped at the descent, and we felt in need of some more food, so we considered the Café Sacher in the Hofburg Imperial Palace which serves original Sacher-Torte, and the 1877 Café Central which has lovely Austrian cuisine of fine pastries and cakes. The Café Central is just off the famous Maria-Theresien Strasse, and a piano was playing by the Anna statue as we turned off to the Café Central for some sustenance after our long walk and before dinner at our Hotel.

Andrew dined on an unusual moist dish of lightly roasted potatoes with a fried egg, strips of beef, a little diced bacon all served in a small wok and accompanied by a lovely dressed cabbage side salad.

Louise having a smaller and sweeter appetite enjoyed a delicious apfel strudel with vanilla sauce and star fruit decoration.

Innsbruck is a wonderful destination, and there is a lot to explore in one day if you wish to walk as well.



Apfel Strudel