

WINTER 2017/18

Ski amadé high cuisine



Ski **amadé**

Things taste particularly good in Austria's greatest skiing paradise. The highest farmers' market in the Alps takes place in Ski amadé.

With its 760km of slopes, Ski amadé isn't just the largest skiing network in Austria. Its culinary offerings are also beyond comparison. 260 mountain huts and restaurants situated in the middle of the ski resorts serve up everything a skier's heart desires, from bread with bacon to trout fillets and roast beef. The culinary delights are also of the highest quality, and not just restricted to the huts any more; they can also be found in market stands throughout the ski resorts. The highest farmers' market in the Alps is entering its third season this winter.

Where the farmer delivers directly to the highest market for skiers

Having been so successful since its debut two years ago, the highest farmers' market in the Alps will once again take place in the 2017/18 season. Local farmers sell their own produce from market stands at the ski huts. The "highest farmers' market in the Alps" is a very fitting name for this initiative, demonstrated by the fact that the highest situated market stalls are on the Dachstein Glacier, and in the Panoramic Dome in Sportgastein, standing at 2,700m above sea level. This season the market stalls are open in the huts from 10th – 17th March.

This initiative has come about as the result of a perfect collaboration between agriculture and the mountain hut hospitality industry. It's in exactly the same places that, in the winter months, the skiers glide down in to the valley, and during the summer months cows graze, wild herbs, berries and pine trees grow, and bees industrially collect pollen. During the autumn, even before the first skiers arrive, the natural resources are harvested and processed. The local producers and farmers manufacture full-flavoured cheese from the milk of the cows that have spent their summer on the high mountain pastures. They dry out the wild herbs, using them for tea or to season salt, preserve the finest berry jams, distil schnapps from pine cones or gentian roots and extract the superior mountain forest honey. All these products then find their way onto the skier's plate, as much stock is placed on locally sourced products in Ski amadé's Ski and Wine gourmet huts. Cheese, bacon, fish, schnapps or honey are not imported, but simply brought from the valley directly by the farmers or producers to the mountain huts, where they are made into tasty dishes.

Ski-in farmers' market at the ski huts

Ski amadé is well known for its numerous culinary initiatives, such as the cable car dinner, "Skihauben" (similar to Michelin-starred) dishes, fantastic food and drinks

offers as well as the Ski & Wine Gourmet Weeks. The highest farmers' market in the Alps was a roaring success when it opened in March 2016 and has since then been a fixed date in Ski amadé's outstanding ski-and-culinary calendar. If you're planning to visit Ski amadé's certified Ski and Wine gourmet huts during the Ski and Wine Gourmet Week from 10th – 17th March 2018 you can stop off at the market stalls whilst you're there. The stalls (or stall) at the hut are run by the farmers and producers themselves, and all offer a wide range of traditional products, from smoked trout, to pickled vegetables, herbal spreads, various types of liquor, herbal salt, farmhouse bread, products from Enns valley sheep and much more. In addition, skiers who drop in at the market can sample products at some stalls: traditional Plattkräpfen (savoury doughnuts) served alongside sauerkraut or genuine Pongau meat pancakes. At some of the stalls you won't even need to take your skis off, as it's a ski-in farmer's market, so to speak. And you can, of course, buy whatever most appeals to you there and then. If you don't have a shopping basket – or, in other words a ski rucksack – with you, you can pick up a small jute rucksack from the local producers on the stall, so that you can transport your shopping in safety and style back down to the valley.

It's a real sporty challenge for skiers to try and attempt to visit all market stalls in Ski amadé. If, by the end of your stay, your market rucksack contains cheese from the stall in front of the Steinbock Alm, bacon from the stall by the Tiergartenalm and pine schnapps from the stand at the Wiesenstadl, you will have covered many of the 760 kilometres of slopes and have wholeheartedly earned your bacon, cheese and schnapps. It's also a lovely experience to have a stand put together a bag containing the very best products for you, and to have a picnic at one of the designated 5-senses spots, on a rustic wooden bench, on a giant swing or sitting on a wooden throne with a view across the mountain peaks.

Ski and Wine gourmet weeks in March: the highest-quality gastronomic experience

Expect numerous events both up in the ski resorts' mountain huts and in the hotels down in the valley during Ski and Wine Gourmet Weeks, all of which are centred around Austrian wine culture and regional products. Twenty mountain huts and restaurants in Ski amadé now belong to Ski amadé's Ski and Wine Gourmet hut partners. They have a certification plaque at their entrance and are characterised by extensive wine selections, a regional menu made with local produce and a particular service culture, and this is naturally also extended well beyond the Ski and Wine Gourmet Weeks.

The special regional dishes are listed separately on the menu, with a clear note as to their origin. The mountain hut proprietors offer at least two different regional dishes which are made from local products. In addition to this there are wine pairing recommendations to go with the gourmet ski dishes. During the Ski and Wine Gourmet Week, skiers could, for example, order a slice of pink roast beef sourced from a Pongau cow or a blueberry strudel containing hand-picked blueberries from Hauser Kaibling and quark cheese from the Enns valley dairy. A glass of Austrian Grüner Veltliner or Blauer Zweigelt would be highly recommended to go alongside that.

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