

Bregenz

Bregenz is the capital of Vorarlberg in Austria.

Understand

Bregenz has about 28,000 inhabitants and has roots back to Roman times. The Romans originally founded the city in 15 BC, when it was known as *Brigantium*.

Bregenz is located at the northern edge of the Alps, between Lake Constance (the *Bodensee*) and the Pfänder (1064m). To the west lies the Rhine delta, a huge valley dividing Switzerland and Austria. To the south lie the mountains of Switzerland and southern Vorarlberg. To the north, overlooking Lake Constance, are the hills of the Allgäu of Baden-Württemberg and Bayern in Germany.

Bregenz is the capital of Austria's most modern province. The shore of Lake Constance, one of the biggest lakes in Europe, meets with Downtown! It is highly advisable to go down to the lake in the evening and check out the beautiful sunset. Austria is the only country to have free access to the lake, a privilege that the inhabitants of Vorarlberg are very proud of and that shapes their way of life. Inhabitants of Vorarlberg are said to be much more friendly and open than the rest of Austria.

Visitor Information Centre

Bregenz Tourismus & Stadtmarketing, Bahnhofstraße 14, +43 5574 49590, Fax: +43 5574 495959, tourismus@bregenz.at. M-F 8.30AM-6PM, Sa 9AM-12PM.

Get in

By plane

Zurich-Kloten: quite big airport, about 1 hour with train/car (100km). Friedrichshafen: smaller, but closer, about 40km from Bregenz. Approached by some bigger companies like Condor and Ryanair (to/from Stansted London). Munich: Biggest airport around. About 2 1/2h to Bregenz. Altenrhein: Switzerland, about 20km to Bregenz; few connections to Vienna, etc.

By train

The Hauptbahnhof, F.-Mayer-Platz 1, +43 5574 93000, is located in the north of the city, close to the lake and the city center. From Lyon/Genf, Strassbourg/Basel, Milano/Luzern

via Zurich. From Stuttgart/Ulm and Munich through Lindau. From Vienna, Salzburg, and Venice/Italy: via Innsbruck direct or with change in Feldkirch (about 35km). On this line trains leave about every 2 hours. Prices: Vienna to Bregenz about 65€ (full price)

By car

From direction Vienna: On the A1 via Salzburg via Germany. In Rosenheim/Ger you have to decide if you drive via Munich (almost only motorway, but sometimes heavy traffic) or via Innsbruck (have to pass the Arlberg tunnel - 15€). From Chur/Zurich: about 10km to the swiss motorway. From Ulm/Stuttgart and Munich via Lindau, motorway tangents Bregenz City.

By bus

Check out Eurolines from Vienna, Berlin, etc.

Get around

There are a number of bus lines in the city.

In summer, bicycles are perhaps the best way to get around, as Bregenz is quite small. Bicycles can be rented from the main railway station.

It is possible to travel along the lakeshore by railway to both Switzerland and Germany.

If you want to visit the nearby Bregenzerwald, a mountainous area south-east of Bregenz, take a bus from the railway station, or take the train to Dornbirn and transfer there.

See

- **Kunsthau Bregenz**, Karl Tizian Platz, +43 5574 48594-0, Daily, 10AM-8PM., other discounts for certain groups. Contemporary art exhibitions.
- **Martinsturm** (Martin's Tower), +43 5574 46632. Open from Easter to October 15th. July 18-August 19: Daily, 9AM-6:30PM, otherwise closed Mondays. Bregenz's most famous landmark, the tower features the largest "onion cupola" in Europe.
- **Kirchgasse 29**. The narrowest house facade in Europe.

Do

In summer, Bregenz offers many possibilities. Bregenz is splendid for swimming in the lake (the lake's temperature reaches 79 degrees Fahrenheit in the summer), hiking, cycling, and several other sports.

The **Bregenz Festival** (Bregenzer Festspiele), is a famous festival running from mid-July to mid-August and attracting 200,000 visitors each year. The centerpiece of the festival is its main stage built on Lake Constance, the largest floating stage in the world. In addition to *Tosca* on the main stage, Benjamin Britten's opera *Death in Venice* and a series of orchestral concerts will be performed at the Festival Opera House.

Don't miss the 360° view from the top of the **Pfänder** mountain: you can either walk (ca. 2-3h) or take the cable car (6 min). Signage throughout town will direct you to the cable car station. The cable car operates daily from 8AM-7PM, with departures on the hour and half-hour. April 1-October 31, At the top, there's a restaurant (Berghaus Pfänder, +43 5574 42184) that is open daily, 9:30AM-6:30PM from May 9 to September 23, 2007. There's also an alpine wildlife park (free admission) and a Birds of Prey show (May 1 to October 3, 2007: daily 11AM and 2:30PM). You can also bike the Pfänder. A guide with suggested routes is available from the bottom cable car station. The cable car transports bikes daily from 8AM-10AM and 6PM-7PM for free, else it's €4.

The **Lake Promenade** is a very popular place for residents to stroll and spend the evening. There are shaded paths and outdoor restaurants. The sunsets in Bregenz are beautiful from any place at the lake.

Other things to do:

- **Swimming:** the bathing complex by the lake has a large outdoor pool and an indoor pool. Early May – early September, daily 9AM–8PM. Approx. €4 for adults.
- **Boat cruises:** From April to October, Vorarlberg Lines, 43 5574 42868, info@vorarlberg-lines.at, offers a variety of cruises on Lake Constance, including a scenic 'three-country' cruise (daily 2:30PM); cruises to Friedrichshafen, home of the Zeppelinmuseum (daily, various times); the "Flower Island" of Mainau (daily, various times); the city of Konstanz, home of the Sea Life Center/Aquarium (daily, various times); and a number of sunset and dinner cruises.
- **Casino Bregenz**, Symphonikerplatz 3, +43 5574 45127, Daily 3PM-3AM, F and Sa to 4AM. Men must wear a shirt and jacket, though the casino will provide jackets for the unprepared.

Buy

In general, stores are open Monday to Friday from 9AM to noon and from 2PM to 6PM, Saturdays from 9AM to 4PM.

Wolford, 1-2 Wolfordstrasse, +43 5574 690-1458, Fax: +43 5574 690-1651, wbo94864@wolford.com, [7]. M-Th 9AM-7:30PM, F 9AM-9PM, Sa 9AM-5PM. The maker of stylish hosiery and lingerie is headquartered in Bregenz. This location includes a boutique, factory outlet and restaurant.

Get out

- The **Rolls-Royce Museum**, Gütle 11a, +43 5572 52652, Fax: +43 5572 526526, contact@rolls-royce-museum.at, is located in Dornbirn, a 20-minute drive south of Bregenz.
- **Lindau**, is a nearby island in Germany with a picturesque harbor and lots of little shopping streets.
- **Mainau Island** in Germany, "The Flower Island", +49 7531 303 0, is known for its warm climate and beautiful botanical gardens. During the season (roughly June 1 - Sep 30), the island is open daily from 7AM-8PM. It isn't possible to spend the night on the island. Vorarlberg Lines, 43 5574 42868, info@vorarlberg-lines.at, offers daily boat cruises to Mainau. The trip is about 3.5 hours.
- **Liechtenstein**, is the fourth smallest country in Europe. Bus and train service is available daily from Bregenz to the capital city of Vaduz. The trip is about 1.5 hours.

For more info see: www.wikitravel.org

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