

PHOTOGRAPHING *Austria's Arlberg*

THERE'S MORE TO THE ARLBERG THAN
SENSATIONAL SKIING - IT'S ALSO A FAIRY TALE-LIKE
WONDERLAND FOR PHOTOGRAPHERS. BY DAN AVILA





The Arlberg has many claims to fame – it is one of the world’s most amazing places for snow sports, has a legendary après-ski scene and boasts dining and accommodation befitting of an A-lister playground. It is also breathtakingly beautiful.

In addition to carving the slopes across hundreds of kilometres of immaculate runs, I recently had the chance to break out my camera to capture some of my favourite parts of this alpine enclave.

Engaging in snow sports and photography simultaneously is as challenging as it sounds. For those wanting to push beyond the boundaries of today’s highly capable smartphones, this means backpacking a hefty camera and taking extra care during the inevitable tumble down the slopes.

On the slopes, I packed a single lens and camera combination to keep the packages as light as possible and used a sling bag for quick access to the camera, so I could take a shot and ski off in a matter of seconds.

BEAUTIFUL BY DAY, ENCHANTING BY NIGHT

On a perfect blue-sky day, almost any camera can capture a wonderful image. Shooting at night is far more challenging and this is where the good gear and a little know-how pays dividends. Of the five stunning towns that make up the Arlberg — Lech, St Anton am Arlberg, St Christoph, Zürs and Stuben — the style-capital of Lech is my favourite. Even when blue skies turned white, producing heavy snow flurries, these beautiful towns and landscapes delivered the goods. Photographing this region is less adrenaline-pumping than hurtling around the legendary White Ring ski circuit or donning the avalanche kit for some of the best hardcore, deep powder skiing anywhere, but it is no less rewarding. Although, it does mean some extra luggage, I recommend taking a sturdy tripod so when walking around the fairy tale towns at night, or swapping skis for snowshoes, the quality of images in low-light will be vastly improved. •

Dan shot these images on the Fujifilm GFX50S Medium Format Camera, with the GF120mm f/4 macro, GF32-64mm f/4 and GF23mm f/4 lenses.



Opening image: The gorgeous and glamorous town of Lech is stunning by night.

Clockwise from left: The pre-dawn view of Lech from the rooms at Hotel Kristiania; The historic church near the main square in Lech; Just out of Lech, enchanting forests can be explored on snowshoes.



Clockwise from right: Strolling through the village of St Anton am Arlberg; There is more to the region than downhill skiing, with snowshoeing and cross country trails offering a tranquil and natural experience; Traditional timber lodges create a feeling of warmth against the powder-covered landscape; The White Ring covers some amazing terrain with incredible views.





TRAVEL FACTS

GETTING THERE

Fly into Zurich and make the two-hour drive to The Arlberg.

WHERE TO STAY

- Hotel Kristiania: kristiania.at
- Hotel Schwarzer Adler: schwarzeradler.com/en/
- Alkira Apartments: alkira.at/en

FURTHER INFORMATION

Austrian National Tourist Office: austria.info/skiing