

Appenzell Inn-to-Inn Hiking



HIKING IN THE APPENZELL AND ALPSTEIN LANDSCAPE!

Trip Highlights

- Begin and conclude your adventure in the town of Appenzell, full of traditional charm, rural customs, fancifully decorated buildings, and amazing cheese
- Stay in three of the famous mountain guest houses in the Alpstein range, known for their high standard of comfort, welcoming hospitality, and exquisite settings
- Climb the famed Lisengrat on a cable-assisted route to the summit of Sântis, eastern Switzerland's highest peak
- Descend to Ebenalp and conclude your Alpstein traverse visiting Wildkirchli caves, a fascinating Paleolithic site and hermitage in ancient times

Activity Level

Alpenwild trips are designed for people who are energetic, active, and filled with a spirit of adventure. We rate this trip as moderate. You should be capable of walking 5 to 7 hours per day on good trails with some steep ascents and descents at an elevation up to 8,300 feet above sea level. Some trails have steep drop-offs where exposure to falling is well-protected with steel cables.

Overview

Appenzell abounds with rich Swiss tradition--and you'll see it in the food, the architecture, and the people. This half-canton of only 66 square miles is packed with more charm and cultural richness than is found in many countries. All of this tradition is cradled and protected by the surrounding mountains, the Alpstein range, which would be foreboding were it not for the intricate network of trails and dozens of welcoming guesthouses and mountain hotels dotting the range.

World-class Alps Hiking in Exquisite Mountain Scenery

The Alpstein Range is reminiscent of a mini-Dolomites with limestone spires that seem to plunge their way through the lush alpine meadows. With all of this jaw-dropping scenery, you'd think Appenzell would be crowded, but not so. It does a wonderful job of preserving its rural charm peaceful setting. Views stretch out in all directions and on any given day you gaze out over Austria's Tirol, Germany, Italy, Liechtenstein, and of course other peaks of the Swiss Alps. A trek in the Alpstein range is a classic mountain experience, filled with a superb combination of expertly crafted trails, wonderful accommodations, delectable cuisine, aromatic Appenzeller cheese, and great company on the trail.

Itinerary

Day 1 – Arrive in Zürich. Transfer to Appenzell

After arrival in Zürich you will take a short train journey to the town of Appenzell in the half-canton of Appenzell Innerrhoden. Our hotel is set on the main pedestrian shopping street of Appenzell, near Landsgemeinde square with a historical democratic tradition dating to 1378. We'll have time for a cultural walk, then enjoy dinner and a group orientation. D

Day 2 – Alpstein, Bollenwees

A short train ride on the local Appenzellerbahn takes us to the village of Brulisau where we begin our Alpstein adventure. We ascend the Alpstein massif with its towering limestone pinnacles and ridges by a

tram to the summit of Hoher Kasten. Then depart along the ridgeline with commanding views that extend into the Rhine Valley, Liechtenstein, Austria, and Germany. We descend through the Saxer Lucke on a historic route. The winding trail leads to a treasured berghaus at Bollenwees on the shore of the Falensee. BLD

Start at Hoher Kasten, 6000 feet | End at Bollenwees, 4800 feet | Walking time 5 hours

Day 3 – Alpstein, Meglisalp

Hiking deeper into the Alpstein takes us across high alpine meadows and passes with stunning vistas and peaks. Tucked away on an alp fed by a mountain stream we stop at a small family farm for refreshing milk shake or panna cotta treat. Continuing over the Botzel pass we descend and stay the night on a working farm and traditional mountain retreat at Berghaus Meglisalp. BLD

Start at Bollenwees, 4800 feet | End at Meglisalp, 5000 feet | Walking time 4 hours

Day 4 – Alpstein, Mt. Säntis

A steady ascent along a rocky trail leads from Meglisalp to the Rotsteinpass where we stop at the guesthouse for lunch. We regularly have ibex sightings at this pass as a large herd occupies the crags of the Altmann peak. Departing Rotsteinpass we tackle the famed Lisengrat, one of the finest trails in the Alps. The rocky route is protected with well-placed steps and cables and leads on to the summit of Säntis (2502m), the highest peak in eastern Switzerland. We overnight on the summit of Säntis in a classic berghotel dating to 1846, but with all the modern comforts following its recent renovation. BLD

Start at Meglisalp, 5000 feet | End at Säntis summit, 8200 feet | Walking time 4.5 hours

Day 5 – Ebenalp, Wildkirchli

A panoramic ridge trail takes us to Ebenalp and the limestone caves of Wildkirchli with evidence of habitation dating to the Paleolithic era. We visit the small museum on site and a chapel set in the stone used anciently by monks and hermits. We stop at the Aescher guesthouse which is built into the rock wall below Ebenalp. We return to Appenzell via a quick tram descent (the second steepest tram in Switzerland) or through forest and meadows to finish in our superb hotel situated in the heart of town. BLD

Start at Säntis summit, 8200 feet | End at Ebenalp, 5500 feet | Walking time 5 hours

Day 6 – Zürich

Today offers many options including a guided e-bike ride through the hills and farmland surrounding Appenzell, with a stop for a concluding meal at the Appenzeller cheese dairy. You'll have ample time in the afternoon to enjoy the characterful town of Appenzell on your own. Return to Zürich for a final night before departure. BLD

Day 7 – Depart Zürich

Depart Zürich for return flights or onward travel. B

Included

The services of an expert trip leader, all accommodations (3 nights hotel and 3 nights in mountain guesthouses), all meals as shown (B=breakfast, S=snack, D=dinner), ground transportation including trams and mountain railways, admissions. The inns on days 2,3, and 4 are not accessible for luggage transfers.

Not Included

Beverages (beer, wine) with meals, items of a personal nature (laundry, phone calls, room service)

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