

Tirol

Region, capital, inhabitants

Tirol is one of 9 counties in Austria. About 700.000 people live there. The capital of Tirol is Innsbruck. Innsbruck is a famous capital of sports, as the Olympic Winter Games were held here in 1964 and 1976. Tirol has been part of Austria since 1363. In 1918 the southern part of the Tirol (Südtirol) became part of Italy as a result of World War I.



Countryside

Tirol is an alpine region with mountains up to 3.800 meters and with many glaciers and snow-covered peaks. The Inn-valley dominates the heart of the country. It stretches like a backbone from east to west and offers wonderful places for cities and villages. Smaller valleys lead into the mountains and harbour numerous picturesque villages, many of them - like Kitzbühel, Mayrhofen or Ischgl - are known as famous tourist resorts all over the world.



Economy

Although Tirol is known as an ideal destination for tourists it is also the home for some major industrial companies - such as Novartis, Swarovsky or Plansee. However, it's the innovative small and medium sized businesses which are the real heart of our economy.

Problems

The main highway across the Alps leads through the central valley and up the Brenner pass. Over the past years the growing traffic pollution has led to massive protests. Activists have already blocked the highway several times and forced national and European politicians to take more effective measures to limit lorry traffic.

Sports

Tirol's wonderful nature make it a paradise for almost any kind of outdoor sports. Most prominent among them are downhill and crosscountry skiing in winter and climbing, hiking and mountainbiking in summer. Of course Tirol's most famous sportsmen are skiers (like Stephan Eberharter or Benni Raich).



Way of life

Yodelling farmboys may still live on as a stereotype of days gone by. Real Tyroleans, however, have well arrived in the 21st century. Regional differences still live on in local dialects and mentalities. In the eastern regions people are more open-minded, friendly and always ready for a good joke. In the western valleys people will probably keep a distance, but if you've made a friend it'll be for a lifetime.