PRESS RELEASE

**Latest news from Lech Zürs including future-oriented projects and outstanding offers with a focus on sustainable development**

**Lech Zürs, 14 September 2023 – From the outset, Lech Zürs has demonstrated a commitment to sustainable development and has thus established itself as a trendsetter, particularly in tourism. The harmony between man and nature is not the only reoccurring theme. The combination of proven methods and innovative ideas is just as important for the future. Two examples are the "Lechwelten Convention Centre" and "Dorfhus," new neighbouring buildings in the heart of the village that will combine to form a multifunctional meeting space when they are opened in the summer of 2024. The concept underpinning these buildings brings together the advantages and distinctive features that characterise and distinguish Lech. This includes the high-caliber range of arts and culture on offer, including Skyspace Lech which is an impressive public work of art in a high-Alpine setting. The region also makes its mark in terms of infrastructure, for example with the new small hydroelectric power plant. The renovated Albonabahn I cable car in Stuben is further evidence of ongoing quality improvements. A strong focus on quality is an important factor. Small wonder that Lech Zürs became a gourmet meeting place par excellence.**

Amongst the latest news from Lech Zürs, the most significant is probably the imminent completion of the "Lechwelten Convention Centre." Although their opening (together with the "Dorfhus" as an architectural duo) will not take place until the summer of 2024, the buildings already bear witness to the successful melding of traditional village aesthetics and modern architecture. This is a logical continuation of the strategy of making optimum use of on-site conditions for innovative solutions and unique offerings. A prime example of this is the Skyspace Lech, a flagship artistic project which opened in 2018 and combines the experiences of nature and art in a fascinating way. When it comes to local development or tourism offers, the guiding principles in Lech Zürs include, in particular, lasting value and sustainability. For instance, the small new hydroelectric power plant in Lech is another important milestone on the journey towards energy autonomy. Meanwhile, the superb local culinary offerings can be considered a focus on quality at the highest level. In turn, the erection of the new Albonabahn I in Stuben serves to enhance the quality of Ski Arlberg, with Lech Zürs at its core.

**From summer 2024, the "Lechwelten Convention Centre" will serve as a multifaceted meeting and event location**

Beginning in summer 2024, the "Lechwelten Convention Centre" will invite people to meet and communicate in a variety of ways as a new meeting place in the heart of Lech. This new cultural centre offers space for meetings, conferences, cultural events, presentations, markets, festivals and celebrations, and much more. The carefully chosen location between the characteristic church hill and the newly designed banks of the Lech integrates the Lechwelten Convention Centre into the historic town centre, enriching its ambience with a discreetly modern touch. With its simple elegance, the building was constructed according to ecological principles and clad with local wood, which creates a pleasant atmosphere. The centrepiece is the multifunctional event hall with a gallery for up to 650 visitors, which can be divided into two or three halls if required. Equipped with the latest technology, including a versatile LED wall, the venue also meets the highest acoustic standards thanks to optimum sound control by means of inclined side walls and windows. The panoramic windows as well as the roof-top terrace afford charming views of the high-Alpine landscape, while the predominantly glass façade reflects the surroundings. Thus, the Lechwelten Convention Centre stands for transparency, encounter and interaction, both architecturally and functionally. Situated in the heart of the village, the event location is within easy walking distance. Moreover, there are ideal transport links thanks to the valley station of the Oberlech cable cars right next door, the local bus network, and the new, directly connected underground car park. The neighbouring "Dorfhus" was also designed to be multifunctional and will house the municipal administration offices, Lech Zürs Tourismus, a library, a post office partner and the "village reception," which will serve as a central contact point for citizens and guests alike. The building complex thus achieves numerous synergies and serves as a vibrant place for intellectual, cultural and social exchange.

Additional information available at: [www.lechzuers.com/en/lechwelten](https://www.lechzuers.com/en/lechwelten)

**“Skyspace Lech” A walk-in, high-Alpine art installation by James Turrell**

Accomplished and one-of-a-kind architecture can also be found in unexpected places in Lech Zürs. At the largely underground Skyspace Lech, American landscape artist James Turrell created a colour-light space that is truly evocative. Located just above Oberlech at 1,780 metres, the surrounding Alpine scenery itself is impressive. In the below-ground main room, an oval-shaped opening in the ceiling reveals a view of the sky, which is perceived as part of the room. Moreover, at dawn and dusk, the walls and ceiling are bathed in alternating coloured light. In poor weather, the dome is closed, thereby adding a further dimension to Turrell's Ganzfeld effect, through which the structure of the room seems to dissolve. His intention is to intensify the perception of the senses and to engage with them at the same time. Thus, the Skyspace Lech, which is open all year round, invites visitors to engage in fascinating self-discovery. It is also accessible in winter via hiking trails and a ski run, and guided tours are offered in the evenings.

Additional information available at: [www.lechzuers.com/en/culture-and-lifestyle/culture/skyspace-lech](https://www.lechzuers.com/en/culture-and-lifestyle/culture/skyspace-lech)

**First small hydropower plant in Lech Zürs as a step towards energy autonomy**

At the beginning of the year, an additional sustainability project was implemented in Lech Zürs. As of January 2023, a small hydroelectric power plant has been supplying the region with renewable energy. To this end, water from the Zürsbach is collected opposite the Zürs heating plant and converted into electricity some 2.3 km further down the valley. With a maximum flow of 2,000 litres of water per second, the two power plant turbines have a rated output of 2,000 kW, which can generate up to 7 million kWh of electricity per year. Thus the power plant covers about 15 % of the electricity consumption of Lech Zürs. And this is just the beginning; another hydroelectric power plant is already in the planning stage in order to move closer to the goals such as energy autonomy and security of supply. The photovoltaic infrastructure is also being continuously expanded. In addition, efficiency and savings measures are constantly being implemented, ranging from the switch to LED for street lighting and the replacement of appliances in tourism businesses. In terms of ecology and sustainability, Lech Zürs has been a trailblazer for decades. The first biomass heating plant was commissioned in Oberlech as early as 1997. The largest biomass heating plant in Austria at the time followed in 1999 in Lech. In combination with the two other plants in Zug (2007) and Zürs (2010), almost 100 percent of the households and businesses can be supplied with pleasant warmth. The biomass heating plants, which are fuelled by wood chips from the region as a renewable energy source, save about 7.75 million litres of heating oil or 24,000 tonnes of CO2 emissions annually. The concept of traffic-free Oberlech, which was once unique in Europe, also caused a sensation back in 1997. In addition, the emission-free infrastructure of cable cars and electric cars for transporting people, luggage and goods soon became a best-practice example. In the same year, the blue fleet of Lech was launched, which is a free local, ski and hiking bus that makes it easier to do without one's own car.

Additional information available at: [www.lechzuers.com/en/guide/sustainability](https://www.lechzuers.com/en/guide/sustainability)

**With 54 toques from the Gault&Millau 2023 gourmet guide, Lech Zürs has cemented its global culinary reputation**

In Lech Zürs, sustainability is more than just a question of energy consumption figures and emission values; it is a comprehensive guideline and attitude to life, which also manifests itself in the culinary arts. For example, local gastronomy primarily relies on regional ingredients. Of high quality due to their origin (from local Alpine pastures), freshness and production, they guarantee exquisite taste and form a solid basis for Alpine gourmet cuisine, even though this naturally includes a wide range of international influences and unique creations. Named a "World Gourmet Village" by Falstaff, the prestigious culinary reputation of Lech Zürs was impressively confirmed by the latest "Gault&Millau 2023" gourmet guide. At the award ceremony in November 2022, 22 local restaurants were awarded a total of 54 toques. For many years, Lech Zürs has enjoyed the highest density of award-winning restaurants in proportion to the number of inhabitants and has become THE destination for gourmets from all over the world. The first-class cuisine is complemented by an equally high-quality wine culture, as underscored by the annual "Arlberg Weinberg" event.

Additional information available at [www.lechzuers.com/en/guide/world-gourmet-village](https://www.lechzuers.com/en/guide/world-gourmet-village)

**The new construction of the Albonabahn I cable car in Stuben improves the quality of the "Ski Arlberg" region**

The new Albonabahn I cable car in Stuben will be opened in time for the coming 2023/24 winter season. As a modern monocable gondola lift with cabins for eight passengers each and a transport capacity of 1,600 guests per hour, it will provide a significant increase in functionality and comfort by replacing the double chairlift built in 1983. The monocable gondola lift will transport passengers both uphill and downhill. The location of the valley station and the route will remain almost the same. The mountain station will be shifted 200 m towards the valley, directly next to the existing "Albona Mitte" mountain restaurant. The new Albonabahn I cable car represents a further improvement in quality for Stuben as well as for the entire Ski Arlberg ski resort. The Albona is well-known and popular for its long north-facing slopes, which promise pure skiing and snowboarding enjoyment until late spring. Via the Albonabahn I cable car and the ski run connection to the "Alpe Rauz," you can access other regions of Ski Arlberg, such as Lech Zürs. Ski Arlberg is Austria's largest contiguous ski area with 305 km of perfectly groomed ski runs and 200 km of powder runs.

Additional information available at: [www.stuben-arlberg.at/en/winter/New-Albonabahn-I/](https://www.stuben-arlberg.at/en/winter/New-Albonabahn-I/)

Additional information available at: [https://www.lechzuers.com/en/](http://www.lechzuers.com/en)

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