

Summer 2019

ALPE

Seiser Alm Magazine

CASTELROTTO · SIUSI ALLO SCILIAR · FIÈ ALLO SCILIAR · SEISER ALM · TIRES AL CATINACCIO

Anniversary

10 years Dolomites UNESCO World Heritage

Balance

In search of our equilibrium

Tuff-Sepp

Hut-owner with passion



Has time come to a standstill here?

OR ARE WE
JUST A STEP AHEAD?

ZALLINGER
MOUNTAIN HOLIDAYS AND RESTAURANT

Original cuisine and fabulous sun terrace with breathtaking views.
Alpe di Siusi, 2,054 m – We can't wait to see you!

Christina & Markus

HOW DO I GET THERE? →

Florian lift
Saltria 74



TRAIL NO. 9 (6 mins)



Hotel Tirlar – TRAIL NO. 9 (1 hr and 15 mins.)

Editorial & Contents



Dear guests!

Action, adventure, Alpine living: whether hiking, climbing, running and biking, paragliding, swimming, enjoying a typical snack or taking a relaxing hay bath, in the holiday area Seiser Alm, ideas are endless. Diverse like the vacation-activities are also the places at the foot of the Sciliar.

Exciting discovery opportunities for children on and around the Seiser Alm take centre-stage this issue: Together with Nix the witch, visitors of all ages can head out on thrilling adventure trails and explore magic castles, ruins, caves and much more.

With the advent of the e-bike, cycling tours have been getting longer and longer over the past few years. In this issue of ALPE, you can learn how to get the most out of your cycling holiday on the Seiser Alm and find out about a number of exhilarating routes.

The Castelrotto Marching Band knows how to get strike the perfect balance between tradition and modernity: With their traditional costume and new re-

hearsal venue, they preserve the traditions of old and, at the same time, venture out into contemporary territory. There is no lack of vitality in Tuff Sepp, either: The famed host tells us about his life: himself and his childhood, his family and his life as tenant of the renowned mountain hut.

The Dolomites have given us ample cause to celebrate this year, on the 10th anniversary of the awarding to a UNESCO World Heritage-site. The Pale Mountains have been a UNESCO World Heritage site since 2009, and their fame reaches far beyond the borders of South Tyrol. Although to a somewhat lesser extent, there is likewise quite a stir of commotion amongst the tree life on the Seiser Alm, where the stone pines, alpine roses and mountain pines put all their energies into trying to survive.

The countryside does not have to be a battlefield, though. Finding your own balance with the primal energy of nature is the founding philosophy of Seiser Alm Balance, where the aim is to enhance one's general wellbeing

with mindfulness, to recharge one's batteries amidst nature, and to find one's own balance with all the senses. One particularly special site is the church in S. Valentino, home to so many mysteries.

ALPE wishes to be your daily guide through your Seiser Alm holidays. Apart from important information regarding public services and interesting events, it gives much advice regarding the best restaurants, inns and clubs as well as many attractive shopping possibilities in the villages of the holiday area and its surrounding areas. This magazine also contains the highlights in our events calendar. Should you decide to participate, your holiday album will be full of unforgettable happy moments.

We wish you a marvellous and unforgettable holiday with enjoyable and relaxing moments.

Eduard Tröbinger Scherlin
President for Seiser Alm Marketing and the Tourist Offices of Castelrotto, Siusi allo Sciliar, Fiè allo Sciliar, Seiser Alm and Tires al Catinaccio

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Dolomiten – Dolomiti – Dolomites

The bizarre rocky forms of the Dolomites are of a magnificence and splendour that is nothing short of unique. Ten years ago, the Pale Mountains were designated a UNESCO World Heritage Site. The pink glow of the Catinaccio in the sunset is stunningly beautiful.



Famed mountaineer Reinhold Messner thinks the Dolomites are the "most beautiful mountains in the world" - and he's not alone.

Beauty beyond compare

The Dolomites are celebrating the birthday of their UNESCO World Heritage-awarding: It was exactly ten years ago that nine of the Dolomite mountain ranges were added to the list, including the Sciliar and the Catinaccio.



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Inclusion in the World Heritage is the highest honour in the world for a natural site, akin to the "Nobel Prize for natural assets," as the South Tyrol Office for Nature Parks says, referencing the words of leading expert Gerhard Heiss from the IUCN, the International Union for Conservation of Nature. In order for a site to be included in the list of World Heritage sites, a thorough and meticulous evaluation is conducted as to whether the site meets UNESCO's rigorous criteria. This includes, for example, determining whether the location is genuinely a unique one of a kind site of exceptional universal importance. If this should be determined, protection of this irreplaceable heritage is no longer the concern and duty of an individual state, but incumbent upon humankind as a whole. Furthermore, if the site is spoiled or significantly deteriorates, this would be considered not only a loss for the site, but also for humanity as a whole.

The "Dolomites UNESCO World Heritage" project was conceived at the outset, and was aimed at promoting awareness amongst local people, sustainable development of the region and, last but not least, international recognition. The protection, preservation and enhancement of the World Heritage site of the Dolomites should be a shared cultural concern which relates not only to the World Heritage status, but creates a new sense of responsibility for the whole of the Dolomite region.

On June 26th 2009, the UNESCO World Heritage Committee (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization) of the United Nations added the Dolomites to the list of World Heritage of Humanity sites: They were classified as a site of unique global significance because of their exceptional natural beauty, together with their geological and geomorphological value. Nine mountain »



Text: Elisabeth Augustin
Photo: Helmuth Rier



10 year anniversary of the UNESCO World Heritage Dolomites

THE JUBILEE EXPERIENCE

The Dolomites UNESCO Geotrail: After the Dolomites were declared a UNESCO World Heritage site, a scheme was developed to design a trekking route through the Dolomites which would offer hikers an up-close view of their incredible history. The trail leads from the Rio delle Foglie/Bletterbach Gorge along ten stages, including the Tierser Alpl refuge and the Seiser Alm to Sesto.

Geologists' Trail in Siusi allo Sciliar: The nature trail known as the "Geologists' Trail" is one of the most fascinating geological hikes in the UNESCO World Heritage Dolomites. The path features ten information boards which illustrate the formation of the Dolomites and their many layers of rock.

Sciliar-Catinaccio Nature Park Visitor Centre: At the entrance to the Val Ciarn Valley in Tires al Catinaccio, close to Lavina Bianca, you will find the Visitor Centre of the Sciliar-Catinaccio Nature Park, housed in the erstwhile Steger Säge sawmill, a rarely seen exemplar of a water-powered Venetian sawmill. The building has been renovated in recent years and the sawmill is up and running once more.

JUBILEE EVENTS

To celebrate the 10th jubilee, countless events have been organised throughout the entire World Heritage area. The official inauguration by the UNESCO Dolomites association, will be taking place on Saturday July 8th in Cortina. Four musical bands, one from each province, will illustrate the diversity of the World Heritage area, and a Jubilee Publication will be published.

Visitors to the "Dolomites UNESCO World Heritage" multivision-show in the Laechler Hunting Lodge in Castelrotto will have the chance to embark on a trip through time and explore the millions of years of history of the "Pale Mountains." On 19th and 26th June and 11th and 25th September (German) and on 10th and 17th July and 14th August (Italian), Valentin Pardeller will be explaining the geology and conformation of the mountains, the flora and fauna, and exhibiting year-round images from all four seasons.

At the same time, between 24 June and 29 September the exhibition **"Dolomites UNESCO world heritage - photo by Georg Tappeiner"** takes place at the Sciliar-Catinaccio nature park visitor's centre in Siusi allo Sciliar.

On Saturday June 29th 2019, the **Dolomites UNESCO Fest** will be taking place in S. Vigilio di Marebbe. Dedicated to the people of the Dolomites, it promises to be a fun-packed family event for guests and locals alike, with music, culinary delights and workshops.

On Sunday June 16th, the solemn inauguration of the **Mastlè World Heritage viewing platform will be held in S. Cristina in Val Gardena.** World Heritage viewing platforms are carefully selected vantage points on the mountains where you can see everything that makes the Dolomites so special.

The **UNESCO Dolomites Experts' Forum III in Sesto/Sexten**, under the scientific direction of EURAC will be focussing on the theme of "10 years UNESCO World Heritage" and will take place on Monday September 30th.

Dolomite rock is recognisable by its stately pale hue. The Tofana in the Ampezzo Dolomites radiate the same glow (right).

ranges - a representative sample of the Dolomites – were listed as a UNESCO World Heritage "serial property," in that these mountain ranges, though distinct and separate in spatial terms, come together to form a natural, geological and geomorphological whole. The area is around 142,000 hectares and stretches over the provinces of Bolzano (South Tyrol), Pordenone, Trento, Belluno and Udine. In South Tyrol, the Nature Parks of the Tre Cime, Fanes-Sennes-Braies, Puez-Odle, Sciliar-Catinaccio, the Latemar mountain and the natural monument of the Bletterbach Gorge are all part of the World Heritage site.

There was great rejoicing in the extraordinary mountain region in 2009. Even though countryside lovers and mountain climbers from all corners of the world have long been familiar with the surreal rocky formation, the harsh natural landscape and the unusual flora and fauna of the Dolomite Mountains, official recognition of this from UNESCO was no less precious than a Nobel Prize. Ten years on, Director of the Office for Nature Parks Enrico Brutti, who is responsible for the "Dolomites UNESCO World Heritage" site in South Tyrol, tells us: "In our nearly 10 years of experience, we have seen that this recognition has brought immense visibility and attractiveness. In South Tyrol, the World Heritage listing has proven to be particularly appreciated in the tourism sector and a variety of interest groups."

The tourism industry interpreted this recognition as a call to merge environmental preservation with economic utility, and, above all, to focus on self-improvement and responsible marketing. Some people viewed this "seal of approval" as a distinct advantage in future marketing and sniffed a chance to make South Tyrol even more appealing for tourism. Others looked around and realised that, the rising numbers of tourists would expose the Dolomite area to considerable pressure in summer and winter alike. For this reason, no widespread »





The Dolomite peaks are unmistakable both in shape and in beauty: The Tre Cime, the Sasso Putia in the Puez-Odle nature park and the Sciliar (from top to bottom).

marketing campaign for the World Heritage site has been organised. Efforts have been made in recent years, rather, to promote awareness of the immense value of the area amongst both locals and tourists. The allure of the “Dolomites UNESCO World Heritage” appellation is undisputed. In the summer half of 2018, guests to South Tyrol numbered 4.6 million, while almost 3 million tourists made their way here in winter 2017/2018. South Tyrol has seen some outstanding years for tourism then, and is more popular with holidaymakers than ever before. That said, one cannot really talk of the “World Natural Heritage effect,” as guests are spread out over the whole of South Tyrol rather than just the Dolomite area, and make the most of the full spectrum of attractions that South Tyrol offers. One certainty, as a number of surveys have revealed, is that the Dolomites are much more famous than South Tyrol itself amongst far-flung markets. There are also people who choose their holiday destination specifically because of awards, and the UNESCO World Heritage title most certainly comes under that category.

Local tourism marketing provider IDM South Tyrol have confirmed that internet reviews and social networks have heightened the visibility of the Dolomites, with the notoriety of certain hotspots shooting up in popularity over the past few years. Many hotel and restaurant owners in the holiday area Seiser Alm report that they have the impression that tourism is becoming ever more international. However, there is little reason to exult with guests who only come for one day merely to post pictures from certain photo-op spots on social media, a notion so at odds with the true appeal of this extraordinary mountain land so bewitched French geologist Déodat Gratet de Dolomieu: It was he who gave his name to the pale mountains over 200 years ago. «



Foto: SAM/Heinrich Bier

The fascinating mountain scenery of the Dolomites.

The myth of the Dolomites

In South Tyrolean extreme mountaineer Reinhold Messner’s words, they are “the most beautiful mountains in the world“. The incomparable beauty of the Dolomites is widely renowned and for many they are synonymous with excellence in winter holidays.

The mountains of the Dolomites can be thought of as a fossilised coral reef arching up into the sky in spectacular fashion. Thanks to their monumental beauty as well as their geological and geomorphologic significance, the so-called Pale Mountains were awarded UNESCO World Heritage status in 2009. Divided into nine areas and forming part of the Sciliar-Catinaccio Natural Park, the

Dolomites are considered one of the most beautiful natural landscapes in the world.

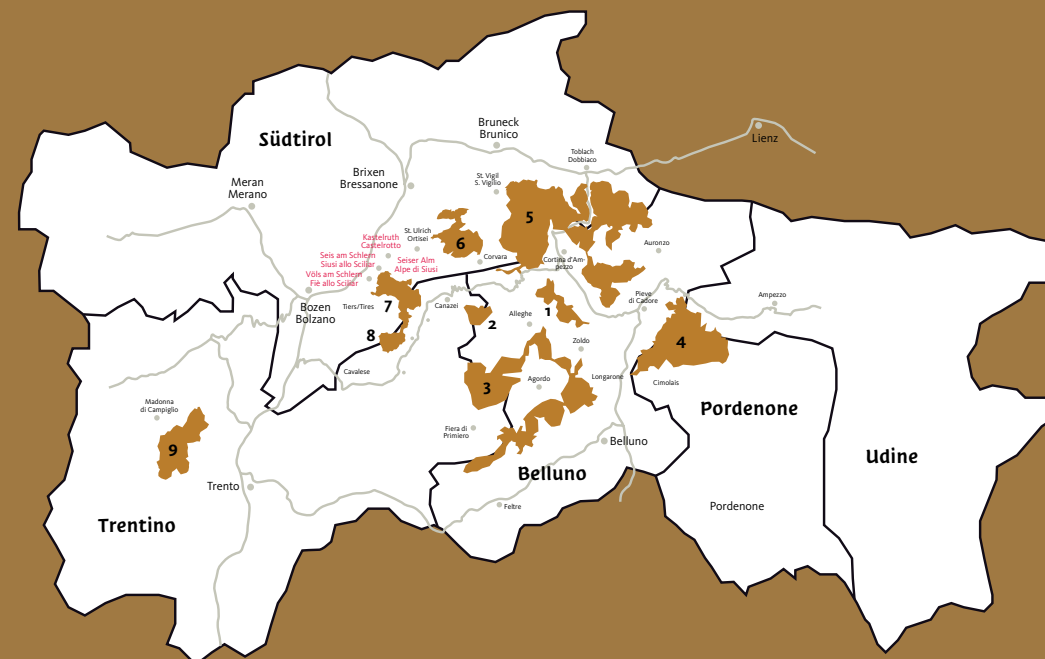
Sciliar-Catinaccio Nature Park: South Tyrol’s oldest natural reserve, a 7,291-hectare park, is situated in the western Dolomites and was founded in 1974. The Sciliar is an impressive mountain range whose emblematic outline, that includes the Santner and

Euringer peaks, stands out as one of the signature landmarks of South Tyrol. The Catinaccio massif, with its numerous peaks, is also known far beyond the country’s borders. The most striking part of the massif is the Catinaccio D’Antermoia peak, which stands at a height of 3,002 metres. The natural park also includes the mountain forests around Siusi, Fiè and Tires, and the Ciamin Valley. «



Dolomites World Heritage UNESCO

- 1 Pelmo, Croda da Lago
- 2 Marmolada
- 3 Pale San Martino, San Lucano Dolomiti Bellunesi, Vette Feltrine
- 4 Friulian and d’Oltre Piave Dolomites
- 5 Northern Dolomites
- 6 Puez-Odle
- 7 Sciliar Catinaccio, Latemar
- 8 Bletterbach
- 9 Brenta Dolomites





Stone pine trees (*ambrus cembra*) mark the tree line and can reach up to 1000 years in age.



Alpine Roses and Stone Pine Woods

The plant life at the foot of the Dolomites fights for survival: The prevailing warriors here on the front line are the stone pine, alpine rose and mountain pine.

N

Right up until the Middle Ages, the Seiser Alm was covered over in forest land. Settlers had already made their homes in the surrounding valleys, most of them Rhaeto-Romanic peoples who had withdrawn to the valleys of the Dolomites. In both climate and landscape, the low mountain ranges of Castelrotto and Fiè were ideally suited to agriculture. In the late Middle Ages, the farmers cleared

most of the forest land to make way for grazing land for cattle. At this time, communal tenure legislation was introduced which remains in force to this day

Alpine farming. Around 90 percent of the forest land on the Seiser Alm is still under the ownership of the Castelrotto local council, and a con- »



Text: Rosa Maria Erlacher
Photo: Helmuth Rier



Pine cones are used to make schnapps.



The Alpine roses blossom in high summer.



The stone pine can hold its own against storm, frost and even lightning.



siderable portion of the grazing land is shared by all the valley farmers. The “Alminteressenschaft” – the interest association of the Seiser Alm oversees these hereditary rights. Ever since the Seiser Alm was listed as a nature reserve in 1992, a forest station belonging to the Province of South Tyrol, headquartered in Castelrotto, has overseen the conservation of the unique Alpine plateau.

Stone pine. Rural areas where plants have to adapt to harsh conditions are particularly sensitive. The stone pine, to name one specimen, is the hardiest plant in the Alps. In the past it abounded on the Seiser Alm, and its wood has been put to prolific use by the wood sculptors from Val Gardena. Wood-clad “Stube” parlours and shingles were made from stone pine, precious grain was stored in stone pine chests to safeguard it from vermin, dressers and wardrobes were built in stone pine as it was thought to keep moths at bay. “Today, there are not as many stone pines on the Seiser Alm as there used to be,” says former forester Hartmann

Daldoss. However, the tree line is still marked by these primordial trees, instantly identifiable with their long, upturned needles and oval, resinous cones. From a forestry perspective the stone pine is not of particularly great importance today, explains Michael Eppacher, Head of the Forestry Station in Castelrotto. In the last few centuries, forests have changed and the spruce superseded many of the original tree species; a fast-growing tree it ensures a good yield in a fairly short time and, as such, its growth was nurtured. “Today, on the other hand, people are devoting their energies to natural regeneration and mixed woodland,” says Eppacher. The stone pine, then, has a good chance of winning back its original terrain, the battle-field between the Alpine meadows and rock.

Mountain pine. Higher up on scree land and rocky slopes is where the mountain pine makes its home. These timberwood trees are capable of withstanding wind and harsh weather, provide shelter for numerous Alpine animals and plants, and fore-

stall erosion. Mountain pine essential oil has always been always famed for its therapeutic properties soul.

Alpine rose. Where meadows, fields and natural grazing pastures, especially in the summer months shape the landscape of the Seiser Alm is where one’s gaze falls on the endless flowerbeds of Alpine rose. The rusty-leaved alpine rose is a species of the rhododendron genus and belongs to the heather family, which also includes the *Rhododendrum hirsutum*, better known as the hairy alpine rose. The two species differ only very slightly in their blossom and the colour of their leaves.


Nature conservation. “Nature conservation on the Seiser Alm is an objective which arose in tandem with its evolution, and is a never-ending balancing act for both the supervisory board and politicians,” says Eppacher. On one hand, the Seiser Alm, largest alpine pasture in Europe in the heart of the Dolomites, is a unique area and this uniqueness should be preserved. On the other hand, the Seiser Alm has provided additional land for the lower-lying farms for centuries on end. Balancing these contrasting demands, in Eppacher’s opinion, is a challenge for both the present and the future.

A hiking paradise. For hikers who love the countryside, the Seiser Alm is an realm of exploration



Alpine roses belong to the heather family and, in days gone by, were used as a natural remedy.

and discovery. Just a stone’s throw from the roads and ski lifts, the countryside opens up to botanic miracles, breathtaking views and unforgettable memories. A network of hiking trails wind and weave over the Seiser Alm, and countless mountain huts welcome you in for a break. There are hikes to suit every level of difficulty on the alpine pastures and in the Sciliar-Catinaccio/Schlern-Rosengarten nature reserve. If you want to see the Alpine rose and stone pine for yourself, then, all you need to do is make your way outdoors. «



In search of balance

“Slow” is the new counter-balance to stress. Many people are no longer willing to live their life as if it were a race, and are seeking out places and opportunities where one can simply “be”.

*Out in the fresh air,
all the senses awaken and
body, spirit and soul unite.*



“Seiser Alm Balance” offers special moments and experiences in the holiday area of the Seiser Alm, designed to restore vitality to body and soul. ALPE talked with Carmen Seidner, Director of Seiser Alm Marketing, about the latest Slow Movement.

ALPE: Wellness, now Balance. Is there a new trend in tourism?

Carmen Seidner: There are megatrends, which are long-term and last several decades, and then

there are medium-term social and cultural trends which last 10 to 15 years. The long-term trend of “wellness” has been a constant for a long time now; the concept is not to merely avoid illness, but to be consciously aware of the balance of one’s vital energy. The increasing burden of pressure in all professions has impelled people to break free and take some time out. We are surrounded by transience and everything has become so fast, mainly as a result of digitalisation:

Everything has to happen in real time, and the deluge of information is beyond our capacity. For this reason, it is extremely important that we learn to get off the treadmill now and again and take a little break from everyday life. Balance means nothing more than trying to find the equilibrium between work, leisure and family. And the best way to do that is to get out and about in the countryside, a yearning which the growing urbanisation of our society brings to the fore.

Holidaymakers are free to wander the woods and the mountains as they like. Why do we need special offers?

If a person has found the method that works best for them and is in a position to take some time off now and again, then there’s no issue. There are, however, people who don’t have time to weigh up all the various options, offers and techniques, so they’re delighted to have somebody to guide them or help them to slow down. It’s

precisely because we are under constant pressure at work to be productive and keep up to date that we want to make our precious free time count, without having to think about other things. With our Balance experiences, all you have to do is turn up at the meeting place at an agreed time. Some people feel more at ease when they’re with like-minded people in a group, and are more motivated to get up early in the morning and head out into the countryside. Group

dynamics also create a special energy. People also appreciate having the chance to talk with our experts, who have a wealth of tips and handy hints for our participants.

What does “Seiser Alm Balance” involve?

The aim of our offer is to invite people out into the fresh air to breathe once more and to recharge their batteries. The countryside, and especially the woods, is the perfect place to do »



it. You don't need much: Even simply breathing mindfully or leaning back against a tree and feeling one's own presence are special experiences for the senses, as is walking barefoot, which in our fearful society we are no longer in the habit of doing. Stimulating our own self-healing powers through communion with nature is important; it has been scientifically proven that the colour green is particularly relaxing for the eyes. People, especially those who live in the city, can satisfy their longing to be in the simplicity of nature and experience something special, with a safety net beneath them. Unlike the 20th century when mountains were looked upon as a "fun and games" destination, in the 21st century they will increasingly be considered a source of energy, a "petrol station for the soul." When people have ever-mounting time pressures to think about, they want their free time to be meaningful. At the end of the day, time is money and we have to spend it well.

What type of guest do these offers appeal to?

People from the local area and holidaymakers of all ages from 16 to 75 sign up for our "Balance" programme, and the number of men who participate is surprisingly high. Health awareness has taken a huge upturn in recent years, particularly because the frenetic pace of life has such an impact on our lives and our free time. That's why it's important to take a step back once in a while. When we talk of work-life bal-

ance, or our own inner balance, the family is one of the main considerations. When we're on holiday we can spend time together at last, something which is often difficult to do the rest of the time. After Balance activities, then, we usually have a group breakfast, brunch or Balance drink. Spending relaxing time in company, surrounded by nature, is exactly what we human beings are looking for nowadays to regain the strength and energy that we need for our everyday lives. Our holiday area is the perfect destination to do just that. In

a recent guest survey, this experience of nature and peace is what our guests appreciated the most.

When can we find our "Balance"?

Seiser Alm Balance begins on May 6th and will be running until June 29th. There are seven different offers which will be taking place in the five villages of the holiday area. We're looking forward to taking our guests out for a spot of Alpine forest bathing, a sunrise workout or a bracing training in the open ... «



Refreshment for the soul: Carmen Seidner is certain that taking short breaks help us to regain our balance.

A one-off in South Tyrol: Even camels graze on the Malga Tuff pastures in summer. They are Tuff Sepp's pride and joy.

Tuff Sepp

Josef Haselrieder, tenant of the Malga Tuff mountain hut high above Fiè allo Sciliar, puts his all into taking care of his guests. As a practically minded man, he makes his way towards his goals with a clear mind and unerring accuracy.

W



When the door to “Paul’s Café” swings open and Tuff Sepp comes in, booming out a hearty “Good morning!” the much-frequented venue in Fiè springs to life. You can neither miss nor ignore Tuff Sepp, and most of the time, along with a fiery temperament, he is the bringer of cheer and all the latest news. Josef Haselrieder, to give him his official name, is the living antithesis to the somewhat reserved people of Fiè. His story is the tale of a man who knows how to seize the day, and in the course of his life - despite the occasional setback - he has built up a small empire through hard work and cheerful optimism. “Success doesn’t just come of its own accord,” he says. “I’ve had luck and a supportive family on my side too.” And that brings us to the tale of a digger-driver turned innkeeper and farmer: “Tuff Sepp.”

Josef Haselrieder, born in 1967 in Val di Vize in the Wipptal Valley, was four years old when he moved to Fiè allo Sciliar with his mother Vroni. Even in primary school Josef and his cousin Peter were seen as somewhat “exotic,” as their dialect was a little different from that of their classmates. Sepp is proud of his heritage, and if anything ever winds him up - well, he can always put it down to not understanding the local ways.

In the 1970s, Sepp was already hard at work in the Rifugio Bolzano mountain hut. The mountain hut,

famed far beyond the borders and located at an altitude of 2,457 metres on the high plateau of the Sciliar, was run for many years by Sepp’s Aunt Hilde and her husband Rudl. He loved spending time on the mountain, and even as a young lad, busied himself in the kitchen and dining room. This period of his life was followed by a number of magical summers spent at the lower-lying Malga Tuff mountain hut, which Sepp’s parents leased. In the summer months, it was also home to a shepherd who looked after the cows and calves of the Fiè farmers. From July to mid-August, Sepp and his siblings Oswald, Heidi and Manfred spent their summer holidays free from care amongst the grazing animals and the guests who had made their way to the Tuffalm. “My mother served the hungry hikers Kaiserschmarrn (Emperor’s Mess) or speck and cheese,” recalls Sepp. “And on Sundays there was always goulash,” he adds with shining eyes. “When I was a boy, it was my job to get the fresh bread from the village and bring it back to the mountain hut. It sometimes took a while, and the guests were already eating by the time I got back,” he says. But who could possibly have been angry with the roguish young lad?

At the age of 14, Josef Haselrieder was taken on as a pipelayer’s apprentice with a company in Fiè. Given that business was not exactly booming in the mid-1980s, after his military service Sepp »



Text: Elisabeth Augustin
Photo: Helmuth Rier

Welcoming hosts:
Josef and Rosalinde Haselrieder
at their beloved Malga Tuff.



changed career and began work with an excavation company in Siusi. "I liked working with the big machines far more than laying pipes," he says. For ten years, digger driving was his great passion in life. At that time, Sepp married Rosalinde, a vivacious young woman from Fiè who worked for the local municipality. "We went to primary school in Fiè together, and I had my eye on her then," rhapsodises Sepp. The wedding bells rang out in 1993 and just one year later their son Hannes was born, followed by their daughter Elisa in 1997 and late-arrival Peter, who came along ten years later.

A place of happy childhood days. In 1996, the local council of Fiè allo Sciliar was looking for a new tenant for the Malga Tuff mountain hut. Anton Mahlknecht, better known as "Sieberer Toni," saw in Josef Haselrieder the perfect successor to farm the Malga Tuff, and encouraged him to put his name forward. "It wasn't an easy decision," says Sepp. "Aunt Hilde and my dad thought I should go for it, but my mother and my wife weren't so keen." However, the allure of returning to this special spot where Sepp had spent such a happy childhood was too much to resist: It couldn't fail to be the right decision. So off he went to the spartan alpine hut, with his parents providing invaluable help in the kitchen and serving guests. With his warm hospitality the dedicated landlord was a great hit, and it wasn't long before the number of guests began to rise steadily. On receiving a heartfelt welcome and a shot of grappa to go along with it, guests felt at home instantly. In time, Sepp's wife Rosalinde joined the business, and the once-modest alpine hut became a favoured destination with locals and holidaymakers alike. Today, the Haselrieders can depend on countless loyal guests, including many South Tyroleans and hikers from the neighbouring Trentino at the weekends.

The wide forest path leading from the Laghetto di Fiè Lake towards the Sciliar is a relatively easy one to tackle. The walk up to the Malga Tuff at 1,270 metres takes around 30 minutes and, in winter, the downhill return is great fun on a sledge. Running alongside the forest road the former luge track, which had to be closed down for safety reasons many years ago, can still be seen today. Fiè allo

Sciliar is a stronghold of sledging, and is home to a number of famed lugers of recent decades. One of these is Sepp's brother Oswald, who, together with his partner Gerhard Plankensteiner, won the bronze medal in the doubles event at the 2006 Turin Winter Olympics. The demands of a professional luge track, however, were incompatible with the principles of the Sciliar-Catinaccio nature reserve, where the Rifugio Bolzano mountain hut, the Malga Tuff and Laghetto di Fiè Lake are located: Certain constraints are imposed here which are, likewise, not always in synch with Josef Haselrieder's plans.

Repeatedly throughout his working life, Sepp has had cause to recall that the balance between economy and ecology is a sensitive topic, but one which he has never been afraid to broach with nature reserve managers. "In the end, however, we've always managed to find a compromise," he admits. Guests come to listen to music and dance on Thursdays, or to the Tuff Festival in September every year. "We try not to be too loud," says the hard-working host. The local council is the owner of the alpine hut, and Sepp the leaseholder. He has been the Tuff landlord for almost 25 years now, and it's time significant investments were made, he says. The roof is in need of repair, and they need a garage for the machinery. Change, however, is not necessarily in the interest of the Department for Nature Parks.

Sepp's son Hannes has taken command of the Malga Tuff kitchen. The talented young chef serves up traditional dishes with his own special twist, and his repertoire covers everything from speck dumplings and *Schlutzkrapfen* spinach-stuffed ravioli, to crispy pork ribs with grilled vegetables, to homemade buckwheat cake and the ever-popular apple strudel. Quality is of the essence for the landlord at the Malga Tuff, and locally-sourced products are used whenever possible. "Food should also be reasonably priced," says Sepp. "And it has to be fast. People don't have the patience to wait nowadays."

The importance of being friendly. Josef Haselrieder demands immense dedication from his employees, along with good manners and the appropriate appearance. On Thursdays and Sundays serv- »



Sepp Haselrieder loves people, and he loves his job as host. Wherever Tuff Sepp is, you'll find the action.

ing staff wear a dirndl or lederhosen and, naturally, a friendly smile. "I'm a stickler for details too," says Sepp. He always sees if a glass is not quite right or the flower arrangement is not perfect. Nevertheless, to the employees he is "Sepp" and not "the boss." His authority is natural and comes partly from his clear ideas and partly from his forthright nature. "I am like a father to some of them. That, amongst other things, makes us all one big family."

Tuff Sepp always takes the time to talk to his guests, and enjoys a chat. His friendliness is an enormous asset, and he always has a ready joke and a quick answer. "The guests are a challenge," he says. "If you are not quick off the mark as a host, you're lost." He is well-known in the local area, as he also likes to spend his free time in South Tyrol. "I'm very lucky in that I remember faces well," he says, adding with a wink: "But it's always easier to remember women."

When asked about his weaknesses, he admits that he can be "a bit obnoxious" when he's had a drink too many, and regrets it the next day. He's not a grudge-holder though, and prefers to clear up any misunderstandings as and when they happen.

When it comes to opportunities, Josef Haselrieder hasn't let one slip by him: the Curia sold a four-acre property next to his home in Fiè a few years ago, where he built a farm and, with it, became

"Sepp the Farmer." The Haselrieder family built a mountain tavern and apartments at the "Pitschmann" farm. Rosalinde has taken over the business and now leads the second important and growing source of the family's income. For a long time, the Tuff "empire" has also managed the council-owned swimming hut at Laghetto di Fiè Lake. Run by Sepp's daughter Elisa, the popular hut offers a variety of refreshments and delicacies at the small swimming lake in Fiè allo Sciliar. The family has also managed the Laghetto di Fiè Lake car park for a number of years. "My mother Vroni particularly likes that. She likes to be in company, and is also fairly inquisitive," smiles Sepp. Sepp is very close to his mother, who many take for his sister (which, needless to say, fills her with pride).

The large family counts several animals. Sepp loves animals, "especially unusual ones," he says. When he brought a white pony back from a trip to visit his daughter Elisa in Germany 20 years ago, he created quite a stir in the mountain village of Fiè. People were no less astonished, including Sepp himself, when employees, family and friends gave him two camels for his 50th birthday two years ago, thus fulfilling a long-nurtured dream for the pet owner. At the moment, Josef Haselrieder is the only South Tyrolean to keep camels; he has already been the source of a flurry of media interest and taken on bookings for the World Cup race in nearby Val Gardena. Sepp waxes lyrical about how easy it is to care for these magnificent animals that graze on the Tuff pastures in summer. He also has a petting zoo with three donkeys, rabbits, a pony, sheep and hens and owns four alpacas, three Noriker and two Haflinger horses, a dog and two cats. His little zoo gives the innkeeper and farmer great joy and, if he has his way, it will get bigger still. Whatever the case, the numerous animals at the Malga Tuff are absolute stars and immensely popular photo opportunities with guests from city and countryside alike.

Nothing ever seems to be too much for Tuff Sepp. He is brimming over with strength and ingenuity. Not even envious people put Sepp off his stride: "People often don't see what's behind it," says Sepp. Success doesn't just come from hard work and assertiveness. "It was good luck too," he says. "A lot of people would say, 'If you're successful, you're not going to be popular everywhere,' but I can live with that," he laughs. «



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Music, with heart and soul

“Make life beautiful through music” is the pledge of the Castelrotto Marching Band, a group of over 80 people brought together by love of music and community spirit.

T

The band always marches on festival days: Whenever there is something to celebrate in the village, the Castelrotto Marching Band is in attendance, and has been since far-off 1796. Without them, the various events such as the Farmer's Wedding in January, the Corpus Christi processions, the Feast of St. Peter and St. Paul, harvest celebrations, the village festival in summer, the Kastelruther Spatzenfest and the New Year's party at the end of the year would be no festival at all. On these important days, the programme is defined by the event, and the music is lively and fun. However, the band is likewise on duty on solemn occasions, at funerals as the final escort for the departed, or on All Saints Day.

The brass band sets off from the new rehearsal room at the bus park and marches towards the church. Members of the fire department stand by the roadside and keep the way free so that they can march without disruption. In the village square, a number of spectators are already awaiting the procession; the smart Castelrotto costume, worn with

pride by the band members, is a sight to behold, and to photograph. The sound of the trumpets and clarinets precede the from afar: The low tones of the tuba and the horn, the bright melody of the flutes. The standard-bearers head the band, the conductor keeps time behind them accompanied by the Sutler women in festive garb.

Spick and span from head to toe, every fold of the pleated collar resting neatly against their neck, shimmering peacock feathers in greenish-blue adorning their hats, the musicians march onwards. Their musical instruments are polished to a sheen, their marching step has been practiced countless times. As the band marches to the village square, the admiring gaze of onlookers follows them. Their costume is handwork at its finest, the work of experts who have mastered loden and leathercraft down to the smallest detail. The white ruff with its tiny pleats is a work of art. It is washed once a year, after which it must be ruffled and starched once again. This job takes a great deal a lot of time and an even more delicate touch.



Text: Barbara Pichler
Photo: Helmuth Rier



From late afternoon onwards, there's generally a hive of activity in front of the band's rehearsal room, and not only from the nearby kindergarten and school. Musicians and musicians rush to rehearsals or stop for a chat in front of the building. March practice is held at the nearby schoolyard. Although the windows of the rehearsal room are sound-proof, the melodies drift out into the open nevertheless, setting the tone for the next festival.

For almost ten years, the Castelrotto Marching Band has had its own quarters in the village centre, where the members meet at least once a week for rehearsals. "Not a day goes by that somebody's not in the rooms. The young people meet up in the music house for rehearsals and talk shop, watch films or cook together," says director Gerhard Prossliner. He is pleased that the young people like the new building and that it fosters a sense of community.



There are separate rooms for the instruments, and for rehearsals and Board meetings. The director raves about the construction of the music house, completely different to a normal house. "For a good sound you need good acoustics; even back when amphitheatres were built in antiquity, this was a known fact," says Prossliner. When designing a music room, you need an acoustician. One particular challenge is the wide range of sounds, from the deepest bass to the highest triangle. The aim is to ensure that all instruments and sounds have a well-balanced relationship with each other. With the sophisticated geometry of its ceiling and walls, this has been achieved masterfully in the new rehearsal room.



Fortunately, the 200 marching bands in South Tyrol draw a large number of young musicians. With good training in the music schools and a new, modern musical repertoire, music making appeals to young people as much as it ever did. The main event in the Castelrotto marching band's calendar is the Josefi concert in March. Every year the concert features a special programme, generally related to a specific theme. The repertoire ranges from marches, polkas and waltzes to jazz and classical music through to rock and pop. A feast of music, for young and old. «



Fine loden, white ruff collars and a green hat with a peacock feather are all part of the traditional festive costume.

The band's new rehearsal room has been fitted with an acoustic ceiling and special wall-cladding to ensure a superb sound



In the holiday area of the Seiser Alm, mountain bike trails will be specifically signposted in summer 2019.

All powered up or still pedalling on?

Have you noticed in the last few years that whenever you pass a cyclist, everybody lowers their eyes to see if your bike's powered or not? E-bikes have revolutionised cycling, and pose a new challenge for all those who work on forest and mountain roads.

T



The sales of electric bikes have rocketed, and are currently at around 60-70% the rate of conventional bikes. The bicycle was developed by Karl von Drais in Germany in 1817; his draisine was the prototype for the first bicycle and, unlike the bikes of today, it was powered by moving the arms rather than pedalling. Over time, the bike was kitted out with pedals and pneumatic tyres and has gone on to become the most commonly used form of transport in the world. For both everyday matters of getting to work or doing the shopping or as a leisure activity, electric bikes are shooting up in popularity.

Alpine pastures and mountains as well as towns are literally overrun with electric bikes, and e-bikers are regularly assailed with refrains of "I haven't sunk that far yet, I still do my own pedalling" and the like. E-bikes aren't just for couch potatoes though – they have, simply, created a new form of cycling. To clear up misconceptions: Cycling remains the same. The only things that have changed are the type and distance of routes that can be cycled with an e-bike. If you think that e-biking

doesn't count as exercise, you're mistaken; you pedal and work up a sweat on an e-bike just as you would with a conventional bike. And if you happen to see a cyclist haring up the mountains at full pelt, it's most likely somebody who is just out on a short trip or is testing out an e-bike and its engine performance for the first time. You can't cycle for long at full engine power.

The wonderful thing about e-biking is that you can get a helping hand if the terrain gets too steep, or if you want to head out on a trip with friends who are in better training than you. Different manufacturers produce differing classes of engine power and, of course, the extent to which you use the power also impacts on the range. Weight also affects performance, so if you're cycling with panniers and heavy baggage, the battery will not last as long. One further, fundamental point to remember with e-bikes: When you're going uphill you have assistance and, with a little skill can get up steep stretches which would otherwise be inaccessible. However, you have to get back downhill, and on steep terrain cycling skills and knowledge »





The Seiser Alm is a paradise for bikers. However, mountain biking is only permitted on wide forest and hiking trails.

BIKE TOURS

Leg power alone, or with the help of a battery: The holiday area of the Seiser Alm offers a wide range of cycling routes at two different altitudes, for all levels of difficulty. Here are three of ALPE's favourites:

SEISER ALM MOUNTAIN HUT TOUR

The Seiser Alm in one single tour: The variety-packed route takes you on an incredible sporting challenge in the heart of the countryside: A full circumnavigation of Europe's largest alpine pasture. The mountain huts along the route offer cool refreshment and fortification for your onward journey.

MALGA TUFF ALM AND HOFER ALPL TOUR

This tour leads you along forest roads through the endless woodland of the Sciliar-Catinaccio nature park. After you pass the Laghetto di Fiè Lake and the Malga Tuff hut, the trail continues onwards to the Hofer Alpl hut on the slopes of the Sciliar.

THE MARINZEN HUT TOUR

This mountain bike tour to the Alpe di Marinzen is ideal for out-of-shape bikers or for a quick half-day trip, and boasts breathtaking views of Castelrotto, a trail that calls for a wide range of techniques, and a variety-packed descent.

are a must. Unfortunately, cyclists on e-bikes often reach heights for which their downhill skills are not sufficient given that the average proficient cyclist can easily manage, 1,000 metres a.s.l. and higher on an electric mountain bike.

An e-bike tour must be planned well. From an aesthetic point of view, e-mountain bikes have been developed to the extent that they are indistinguishable from conventional bikes at first glance. This factor has also resulted in a widening of the circle of e-bike riders: At one time, the cumbersome, ugly battery on the frame was off-putting for many. Although there's nothing "unsporting" about e-biking, the stigma remains. Electric bikes have completely revolutionised cycling; All of a sudden, a large number of leisure cyclists have the possibility to head out on previously undreamt-of routes and they must be planned accordingly if you don't want to encounter any nasty surprises. Thanks to the digitised world, there are now countless websites, apps and programmes with maps and tour suggestions. This is both a blessing and a curse, however, as not all trails which are listed as cycle trails can actually be used as such. Given that the mixed usage of forest and hiking trails can lead to problems, the decision was taken in South Tyrol in 2018 that mayors have the authorisation to restrict bicycle usage on hiking trails. To be on the safe side, then, the best course of action is to go to the local tourist office and ask.

In the holiday area Seiser Alm, up-to-date cycling maps are currently being drawn up, and signposts erected for mountain bike trails. Designated mountain bike tours in the holiday area of the Seiser Alm run on wide forest trails and

not on narrow hiking trails, which should mean that both hikers and bikers can enjoy the countryside in freedom. With a little mutual respect, there is ample room for both hikers and cyclists on the forest trail. First and foremost, access should not be based on prohibitions and on the safety of all those who take part in leisure sports. Oftentimes, especially in the case of elderly hikers, people don't hear cyclists coming and get a fright when they hear a sudden, although well-intentioned, ring of the bell. It is important that cyclists do not take a forest road to be a race track, and to alert hikers to their presence from a distance. The same applies not only to senior citizens but also to families with children, who often need more space on forest trails. Bikes have absolutely no place on narrow trails and hiking paths in high-mountain terrain; if you happen to have strayed onto one of these paths my accident, hikers have precedence at all times and the bike must be pushed.

With the e-bike boom, hikers will most likely have to get used to seeing more and more cyclists. However, when cyclists show consideration, the two activities are not mutually exclusive with a little respect on both sides. It's just like when snowboarding came into vogue, and coexistence with skiers on the slopes took some practice at first. For cyclists who are looking for an adrenalin rush, there are bike parks and downhill trails where there are no limits to the speeds you can reach. If South Tyrol is going to continue to be a paradise for hikers and cyclists, cyclists will have to accept the fact that they're going to have to get off their bike along some stretches of the route – as the saying goes, "If you really love your bike, you'll push it". «

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Losing track of time

How perfect a summer's day spent on the mountain pastures, strolling along the Witches' Trail and flying kites can be, even when you have no idea where the time has gone.

The heights of happiness far from the summits, and so much time for intense experiences.

T



The photos for this article were taken on a late summer's day on the Seiser Alm, a trip originally intended to source material for a feature article on "Hiking with Children." And we're happy to say that we got a whole lot more than we bargained for: During our walk, which we managed to finish in the timeframe we'd planned, we experienced

a series of magical moments which had all the air of being suspended in time. The magic of this day was fuelled by enthusiasm, spontaneity, sheer joy in life and the odd "misdemeanour" on the part of the stars of the day, whose curiosity got the better of them in spite of their best efforts to be cooperative.

Studies based on neuroscientific research have shown us time after time that contact with nature is a primary human need, and is particularly important for cognitive, motor and social development in adolescents. When a child learns to speak, the names of animals are among the first words they learn, even though they know them

only from pictures; although foxes, rabbits and deer are rarely seen in the wild, they abound in the imagination of a child. When left to their own devices in the countryside, children develop their imagination and creativity. This freedom, however, is not without risks which are not only in the minds of the notoriously fret- »

Text: Sabine Funk
Photo: Helmuth Rier

ful parents of today, but also tangible sources of danger such as traffic and, above all, the fact that there are fewer and fewer areas which are suitable for independent exploring. Adventure, oftentimes, is regulated. As wonderful as supervised climbing is for children, it goes without saying that climbing a tree is every bit as much fun.

Anyone who heads to the mountains with their children while on holiday must be aware of certain dangers: A child's level of risk-awareness is completely different to an adult's, and they are often unable to assess the safety of rope trails and mountainous terrain. When children are too young, the long-awaited countryside experience can all too often turn into a situation where they »



When you're flying kites on the Bullaccia, the views rapidly fall into second place.



NIX THE WITCH HIKING BOOKLET

Expert hiker Nix the Witch lives on Europe's largest high alpine pasture year-round, and there's nothing she loves more than hiking on the Seiser Alm or around the surrounding villages: Wherever the trail may be, witch Nix has tried and tested it. The most suitable routes for families with children are all featured in the booklet "Out and About with Nix the Witch." The "Checkpoint Mission" comprises ten hikes, in a perfect blend of sport and adventure for the whole family. The booklet comes complete with a hiking bracelet with symbols to stamp at the checkpoints along the routes. When you hand in your stamped wristband, you can win great surprises and a hiking diploma.

The booklet „Out and about with Nix the Witch“ is available at the Tourist offices of the holiday area Seiser Alm for a donation of 3€, which will be donated to the non-profit-organisation "Südtiroler Kinderdorf", who takes care of children and adolescents in situations of discomfort.



No plastic rubbish:
The Witches' Trail near
Saltria is made up of
100% natural materials.



have to be kept on a short leash and they, unsurprisingly, want to run free. However, if you want to be back down in the valley before the threatening thunderstorm begins in earnest, there's no way you can stay at every little stream until the last pebble has been thrown in.

Mountain hiking with children from a certain age onwards, and in the right company, is fantastic. Children do not want to speed through nature, they want to experience it and explore it. They don't count altitude metres or carry a summit book, and they don't record their achievements in terms of difficulty levels. Making rapid progress to a breathtaking destination (Summit cross! "Kids, look at this view!" – "There's Kaiserschmarrn – shredded omelette at the hut") is all but impossible when there's so much to see to the right and to the left of the path. If you put your foot down and insist on goal-and-results walks, the result is jangling nerves, and the most elementary needs of the children are overlooked. At the end of the day, children don't want to get to the end of a trail as quickly as possible; they want to experience their surroundings with all their senses, at their own (often slow) pace.

Our day on the Witches' Trail in Saltria, where there is so much to discover, from sulphur springs to suspension bridges and tree swings, and on the Bullaccia (where children can be incredibly blind to beautiful views and good visibility, but obsessively interested in the dips and swirls of a kite) has shown us one thing: There's so much to learn from experiencing nature with spontaneity, free from the pressure to "succeed". In a child's measure of time everything lasts as long as it takes, and their attention is focussed on details that you never notice when your gaze is set on a distant goal.

We often talk of slowing down, of mindfulness and of living in the moment. A whole industry of books, mentoring guides and magazines thrives on the theme. In children, many of us may never have noticed the perfect guides who are already at our sides. So then, just as our stars of the day taught us, we are hopeful that this article will serve as a plea to spend time well, to immerse ourselves in our surroundings, and trade purpose and performance for something as endless as a summer's day. «



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The little Neogothic style church as it is today with its vaulted ceilings, rose window and precious frescoes on the inner walls.

Taking a break in a wellspring of energy

The little St. Valentine Church above Siusi allo Sciliar is a treasure trove of art and history.

Y

You feel it instantly: The site of this little church is a special place. Surrounded by green meadows, it boasts breathtaking views of the white Dolomite rock of the Santner and Euringer peaks and the village of Siusi allo Sciliar down below. In front of us, the ruined castles of Salego and Castelvecchio tower up from the dark forests, where once lived the Lords of Salego and the blue-blooded knight Oswald von Wolkenstein, famed throughout the land and beyond as a bard and a diplomat. The view sweeps over the valley land of Bolzano to the glaciers of the main Alpine ridge on the horizon.

Legends and sagas. Endless myths and legends weave their way over the hill where the little church stands. One of these is the legend of the golden bell, which Josef Fulterer narrated in his book "Fables from the Schlern" (*Sagen vom Sciliar*): In the village of S. Valentino, a farmer was out raking the land one day when he came across a golden bell buried under the soil. Together with his neighbours he salvaged the bell, together with some beautiful kitchenware. The findings were thought to be relics from an old village, long since

disappeared. The St. Valentine bell still works miracles to this day: It rings out when a storm is on the way, more often than not circumventing disaster. Another legend tells of a mudslide from the Bullaccia mountain, which is said to have buried the "city" of Siusi.

Early settlers. Archaeological finds indicate that the area was already inhabited in the Bronze Age: In the opposite-lying Runggeck, a sacrificial cult site has been discovered which dates back to prehistoric times. Not far from this area, fragments of wall have also been unearthed which would seem to be evidence of an early settlement. Archaeologists suspect that further remains of prehistoric dwellings may well be buried under the meadows surrounding the St. Valentine Church. It is probable that the church was built as a symbol of Christian faith on a pagan sacrificial site.

A brief history of the church. The first reference to the church dates to the year 1244 AD in a document registering donations which explicitly referred to the church "on the mountain of »



One 15th century fresco on the outer wall depicts the Virgin Mary and child.



Text: Rosa Maria Erlacher
Photo: Helmuth Rier





ST. VALENTINE CHURCH

The St. Valentine church above Siusi allo Sciliar is a 15-20 minute walk from Siusi bus station. To get there, head north-west on the pavement running alongside the main road, past the post office, to the junction of the trail leading to St. Valentin (trail no. 7). You cannot get to the church by car. There is an underground car park at the bus station in Siusi village centre.

The church is not usually open, but can be visited on the following dates: From June 27th to September 5th there is a guided tour of the church every Thursday. This begins at 4.30 pm at the Tourist Office in Siusi (book at the tourist office). On May 9th 2019, the spring hike to the church begins at 10.30 am at the Tourist Office in Siusi (Book at the tourist office).

In September/October, there are also around three organised walks which include a trip to the church. The dates will be confirmed in the near future.

St. Valentine.” The early Romanesque tower of this church still towers up to the day and, with its two rows of arched windows, stands out in clear contrast to the rest of the building. In the centuries which followed, a number conversions and renovations were carried out to match the style of the times. The earliest frescoes, which were discovered under several layers of paint in the church, date to the 14th century when the church was still topped with a flat wooden ceiling in keeping with Romanesque custom. A letter of indulgence from 1475 confirms a reconstruction of the church, during which time the chancel was built.



The Onion Dome. According to records, the church housed two altars in 1594. The outer frescoes date to the 15th century, and the year 1532 has been engraved above the church door. The onion dome atop the octagonal tambour of the church tower is a landmark visible from far and wide, and dates to 1811. A variety of figures were used to create the valuable winged altar in the 19th century, which replaced the earlier two altars. During restoration works from 1962 until 1983, experts discovered several overlapping layers of paint, the last of which, painted in Danube style in 1530, was removed and affixed to the north wall on a canvas.

Beautiful outer frescoes. Given that the church is closed throughout the year except for special occasions such as weddings or the patron saint festival on February 14th, the following description is limited to the beautiful murals on the south and east walls, the work of artists from Bolzano in the 15th century. Thanks to skilled renovation works, the frescoes remain in good condition today; they depict images of St. Valentine the patron saint, and St. Christopher. At the time when Emperor Claudius II banned weddings, St. Valentine was Bishop of Temi and, disregarding the prohibition, continued to wed couples. This is why February 14th is the day of love. And it is also why the church of St. Valentine near Siusi is the church of choice for so many couples, particularly from abroad, to say their vows.

For art lovers. Other frescoes on the south wall depict the Madonna on a throne with the baby Jesus, the adoration of the three Magi,

the veil of Veronica and parts of the crucifixion scene which have, unfortunately, been damaged by a window portal which was fitted in subsequent years. A closer examination of the frescoes reveals chalices, halos, crowns and clothing which were engraved in the wet fresco mortar. These would indicate that precious gold was applied there, which has most likely evaporated over the centuries. Amongst other features on the façade of the church, we see St. Catherine and, above, the Annunciation scene. “These mural paintings are the hallmark of a highly talented Bolzano artist who was inspired by the Verona school,” reveals art historian Karl Gruber in the book “Art in the Parish of Siusi” (“Kunst in der Pfarre Seis am Schlern”) with admiration. The inner frescoes were painted by the same artist, who applied them over the underlying, earlier frescoes.

Daytrip destination. With its fabulous location, amidst lush green meadows and backed by the Sciliar massif and the Santner peak, this church has become one of the most popular photo-destinations in South Tyrol. In days gone by, it was an important site for worshippers and for the farming people from the area, and today it is equally important as a tourism destination. You can only get to the church on foot, as there is no access for cars. Benches in front of the church provide a comfortable space for visitors to sit back, relax and enjoy the cool shade offered by the walnut tree. It is a restful haven and a true wellspring of power, a place where you can rest your soul and absorb the energy. «



Surrounded by green meadows, the little church is a scenic gem and boasts beautiful panoramic views.





Herby Bread Dumplings

“Knödel” bread dumplings are a long-standing tradition in South Tyrol. The down-to-earth dish can be easily adapted to seasons and kitchen supplies: Speck, cheese, mushrooms, spinach, beetroot or herbs, the bread dough welcomes whatever you have to hand. And that’s why the dumpling, in all its many forms, is the national dish of South Tyrol.

INGREDIENTS (SERVES 4)

- 300 g dumpling bread (diced white bread)
- 1/2 leek, or 1 onion
- At least 5 tablespoons fresh herbs, e.g. parsley, chives, basil, thyme, oregano - basically, any herb that you have to hand. Be careful with strong herbs such as sage and rosemary
- 2 tbsps. flour
- Salt
- 2 eggs
- 1/4 l milk

METHOD

Chop the leek or onion finely and sauté. Place the bread in a bowl and add the flour, salt, finely-chopped herbs and leek or onion. Whisk together the eggs and milk and pour over the bread. Mix well and leave to rest for a while. Then, with wet hands, shape the mixture into balls and cook in boiling, salted water for around 15 minutes.

TIP: We recommend cooking a trial dumpling. If it falls apart, add more flour to the mixture.

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The „Konsum Markt“ is a „colorful“ department store in the heart of **Kastelruth / Castelrotto**. It’s the wide range of products that makes it so extraordinary: You’ll find not only an extensive assortment of foods as well as gourmet specialties from **local farmers** and **organic produce** but also agricultural equipment and hardware / appliances. In selecting the merchandise to be offered in our **supermarket**, such aspects as „local production,“ „short shipping distances,“ and „stimulating the local economy“ were major considerations. The wide variety of South Tyrolean specialties available here includes **traditional „schuettelbrot“** („shake bread“) made by the **Burghauner Bakery and Pastry Shop** – a delicacy usually served together with „Kastelruth bacon.“

We are looking forward to your visit!

Summer Preview 2019



> 6 May – 29 June 2019

SEISER ALM BALANCE

As the countryside awakens in spring, the urge to get out into the open air gets ever stronger and draws us out into the great outdoors and the spring air. A variety of events and workshops on the theme of health, balance, nutritious diet, optimal training techniques for runners and equipment will ensure you have all the basics you need to get the warm season off to a good start. www.seiseralm.it/balance

> May – July 2019

HIKES FOR FLOWER LOVERS

Approximately 790 flowering plants and ferns of highly varied appearance and origin can be seen around Sciliar Mountain over the course of the year. Typical Alpine flowers but also botanical rarities flourish on the alp mats, in meadows and wheelbarrows. The nature reserve authorities organize about 20 guided hikes every year in cooperation with the tourism associations of the nature reserve communities with experienced nature reserve hiking guide Riccardo Insam.

> 16 – 19 May 2019

SCHLERN MUSIC - CHAMBER MUSIC BENEATH THE SCILIAR

Fiè allo Sciliar is venturing out into new territory with the relaunch of its Schlern Music Chamber Music Festival. The festival will be held for the first time from 16 to 19 May 2019 and see familiar and less-familiar sides of Mozart's chamber music performed, broken down, contrasted and enriched with contemporary facets and other repertory. With the string quartet formation taking centre-stage, the festival will stage concerts in an informal atmosphere and provide a top-class, non-academic musical experience in a variety of venues, all rounded off with a special gastronomic twist. www.seiseralm.it/schlernmusic

> 26 May – 9 June 2019

FESTIVAL OF FLAVOURS - SECRET KITCHEN STORIES

All fans of regional cuisine can start looking forward to an extraordinary experience to delight the taste buds: From 26 May to 9 June, the gourmet festival "Festival of flavours Dolomites - Secret Kitchen Stories" will be held for the first time ever in the holiday region of the Seiser Alm. The companies which will be taking part will be serving up a variety of spring-inspired "green" dishes, and there will be no limits to their creative impulses; from spring garden herbs to slow, gentle cooking styles to regional Alpine cuisine - anything and everything could lie in store. For each dish, 1 Euro will be donated to Caritas and the White Cross. In addition to the main festival, a "Green Kitchen" theme event will be held in every village in the holiday region of the Seiser Alm.

> 31 May – 2 June 2019

OSWALD VON WOLKENSTEIN RIDING TOURNAMENT

3 days, 4 locations and 36 teams: In tribute to knight and minstrel Oswald von Wolkenstein, the three villages of Castelrotto, Siusi and Fiè allo Sciliar organise a historical riding tournament at its very finest. From 31 May to 02 June 2019, visitors to the Oswald von Wolkenstein Riding Tournament can leap back in time to the 14th century and experience life in the Middle Ages, admire the masterly horsemanship and feel the hospitality in South Tyrol. No other riding tournament has the good fortune to be able to offer this kind of culture, tradition, history, sport and folklore all rolled into one single event. This year, the opening ceremony and festive parade take place in the village Castelrotto. www.ovwritt.com

> 7 July 2019

SEISER ALM HALF MARATHON

21 kilometres, 601 metres of elevation gain and 700 participants: These are the characteristic numbers of the Seiser Alm Half Marathon on 7 July 2019. Surrounded by the Dolomites UNESCO World Heritage, the Seiser Alm Half Marathon is a unique experience and sporting challenge for both professional and amateur athletes. The starter's gun for the running event with start and finish in Compatsch is fired at 10.00 am. running.seiseralm.it

> 13 July 2019

CATINACCIO-SCILIAR SKY MARATHON

Right in the very heart of the unique UNESCO World Heritage Dolomites, an Alpine Mountain Marathon with a length of 45 km and around 3,000 m of elevation difference will be setting off from Tires al Catinaccio: the Catinaccio-Sciliar Sky Marathon. The challenging mountain race will begin in Tires, lead round the Catinaccio Massif, over the Sciliar, past the Monte Cavone Hut and back to Tires. The highest point of the Sky Marathon is the Principe Pass at 2,630 m. www.skymarathoniers.it

> 8 July – 2 September 2019

SUMMER CLASSICS IN SIUSI ALLO SCILIAR

For lovers of classical music, Siusi offers an extraordinary series of concerts. Artists will perform the works of great composers. The "Summer Classics" of Siusi represent a high level of musical talent and have long since become an integral component of our summer cultural program. Both locals and visitors will be enchanted.

Dates:

8, 15 and 22 July
9 and 26 August
2 September 2019

> Summer 2019

OPEN-AIR GOURMET EXTRAVAGANZA

With three unusual open-air gourmet events on the cards, the Seiser Alm summer promises to be something of a culinary experience.

First up is the **Berglertafel** (Mountaineers' Banquet) in Tires al Catinaccio on 18 July – legendary not only for its culinary finesse but also for its spectacular views over the Catinaccio mountain.

On 24 July, Castelrotto will be welcoming its guests to a culinary event steeped in history: the **Krausen Banquet**, where the Monte Calvario hill will be providing the historical backdrop for the evening.

In the beginning of September the gourmet events draw to a close at the **"Vormessn"** on the Seiser Alm, where an exceptional breakfast will be served accompanied by a 360° view of the Seiser Alm.

> 1 – 31 October 2019

THE KUCHLKASTL - CULINARY FESTIVAL

The Kuchlkastl Culinary Festival has been the culinary highlight of autumn in the Seiser Alm holiday area for over 40 years now. Gourmets and lovers of traditional cooking are in for a treat in October, when the restaurants in Fiè allo Sciliar open their doors for the "Gastronomic October" festival. The chefs will be serving up traditional recipes with a modern flair. The theme: Old recipes reinterpreted and served with love. www.voelserkuchlkastl.com

> 11 – 13 October 2019

KASTELRUTHER SPATZEN MUSIC FESTIVAL

Celebrating, spending pleasant evenings together, experiencing the "Kastelruther Spatzen" live: The Spatzen-Festival in Castelrotto is a must for every fan. Surrounded by the unique scenery of the Dolomites the seven "Spatzen" enchant all friends of traditional music.

Preview Winter 2019/20



December 2019

CHRISTMAS IN THE MOUNTAINS IN CASTELROTTO

When the fragrant scent of gingerbread, cinnamon and mulled wine waft through the air, you know its Advent time at the foot of the Sciliar. The Castelrotto Christmas market welcomes everybody to come and enjoy a sociable get-together over a glass of mulled wine and a touch of Christmas spirit. The inhabitants of Castelrotto will unveil the secrets of their Christmas traditions and allow others to participate in them. Beside the little Christmas market, local farmers' wives will offer their cookies, Christmas logs, pastries, and other authentic goodies for sale. Music groups will present songs and tunes in keeping with the „Feast of Love“.

Date:

6 – 8 December 2019
13 – 15 December 2019
21 – 22 December 2019
24 December 2019
26 – 28 December 2019

7 December 2019

KRAMPUS PARADE

Who are the Krampus and what are they doing in Castelrotto? The Krampus is a mythical creature recognized in alpine countries. According to legend, the Krampus accompanies St Nicholas during the Christmas season, warning and punishing bad children, in contrast to St Nicholas, who gives gifts to good children. On 7 December, some Krampus-teams from Italy, Germany and Austria will walk through the streets of Castelrotto, wearing handcrafted masks and dresses and ringing bells.

7 December 2019

WINTER-KIDS-FESTIVAL WITH NIX THE WITCH

The 2019-20 winter season will be getting off to a sparkling start with the fifth Winter-Kids-Festival on the Seiser Alm. This year the festival will take place for the second time in cooperation with the Association for Playgrounds and Recreation, the VKE. The day is guaranteed to be fun: games, an arts and crafts corner, a treasure hunt, good music and masses of surprises to bring a shine to the eyes of every child. And with all this you can also learn to ski or improve your technique. A rescue dog squadron will also start an exciting avalanche search several times a day and will give many valuable tips for safety in the snow. Our famous winter sports athletes of the Seiser Alm holiday area will tell you about their exciting life and will be available for our little ski fans for an autograph session.

19 January 2020

TRADITIONAL COUNTRY WEDDING OF CASTELROTTO

The Country Wedding in Castelrotto has already become a tradition. It's the authentic reproduction of a historical farmer's wedding like those celebrated since time immemorial at the foot of the Seiser Alm. The throngs of participants wear their traditional garments with great pride – one of the reasons why the event has developed into one of South Tyrol's most spectacular pageants.

23 – 26 January 2020

FIS WORLD CUP SLOPESTYLE SNOWBOARD & FREESKI

For the fourth year in a row, the world's best freestylers will be taking to their boards and skis in a gravity-defying display of choreography. The two Slopestyle World Cups will be taking place at the Seiser Alm Snow Park. Slopestyle, first introduced at Sochi 2014, is the most recent extreme-discipline on the Olympic scene, and sees athletes competing on a course, which features a variety of jumps and obstacles. Six judges rate tricks on creativity, difficulty and execution or style, while jumps are evaluated on height, range and landing.

7 February 2020

SOUTH TYROL MOONLIGHT CLASSIC SEISER ALM

A sporting event illuminated by the glow of flickering torchlight, the chance to put your skills to the test at international level, and the spectacular winter backdrop of the Seiser Alm. In 2019, the Moonlight Classic will once again be offering numerous athletes and cross-country fans the chance to spend a sensational evening on the Seiser Alm by night. Participants can opt to take part in either the 30 km or the 15 km variant of the loop route. Both variants begin and end in Compatsch and are raced exclusively in classic diagonal style. The starting pistol for this cross-country spectacle will be fired at 8pm. At the start/finish area, spectators will already have gathered en-masse to enjoy the atmospheric display when the alphorn players and whip crackers take to the floor to set the scene for the evening. www.moonlightclassic.info

8 February 2020

WINTER BERGLERTAFEL

In 2020, the legendary summer's Berglertafel Mountaineers' Banquet in Tires al Catinaccio will be featuring on the winter events' program for the third time. Like its summer counterpart, the Berglertafel's Flying Buffet will be serving classic dishes with a creative twist in a feast for the eyes as well as the stomach, as participants will discover when the day draws to a close with a view over the famed Alpenglow of Catinaccio at sunset.

February 2020

WINTER GOLF TOURNAMENT

Why does a green have to be... well, green? At the winter golf tournament, the greens give way to the white snows of the Seiser Alm, and golfers are treated to spectacular views as they ski or snowboard their way from one hole to the next. The 9 holes range from 61 to 150 m in length and are played with brightly-coloured golf balls, so much easier to spot against the snowy fairways. The tour starts in Compatsch, leads on to the Bullaccia, to the Laurin and Panorama lift and back towards the set-off point. Excellent catering and musical entertainment are provided along the golf course.

16 – 23 March 2020

SWING ON SNOW WINTER MUSIC FESTIVAL

Jazz in the mountain huts, soul on the slopes and traditional tunes in the restaurants in the evenings: Musicians from all over the Alpine region will be performing from morning to night in the Seiser Alm holiday area for the Swing on Snow festival. Bands and singers will be setting the tone on the slopes and getting old and young, winter sports visitors and music lovers alike, into the party mood. The modern interpretation of traditional folk music with jazz, soul and pop reflect the musical culture of the Alps; listeners can swerve in time to the beats and rhythms, and weave their way downhill to the sounds of the tuba, bass, dulcimer and accordion. Concerts will be played on the slopes of the Seiser Alm in the mornings, afternoons in the huts and evenings in the villages of Castelrotto, Siusi, Fiè allo Sciliar and Tires al Catinaccio. www.swingonsnow.com

March 2020

WORLD ROOKIE TOUR – FREESKI FINALS

The Seiser Alm Snowpark will host the first Freeski Rookie Finals for the second time in March 2020. The international contest combines sports competition with a lifestyle experience, where talented under 18 freeskier from several nations meet and compete for prestigious prizes. During the finals of the freeskiers, which qualified on the tour in Austria, Switzerland, the USA and Slovakia, will be awarded the World Rookie Freeski Champions. In addition to the competition, the World Rookie Tour Events include a strong lifestyle program with video premiere, workshops, parties, yoga lessons, meetings on typical dinners and much more. www.worldrookietour.com

March 2020

DOLOVINO ON SNOW ON SEISER ALM

Dolovino on Snow invites you to celebrate the theme of "Top Alto Adige wines at the foot of the Dolomites" on a wine-tour across the Seiser Alm. South Tyrol is not just a paradise for skiers and hikers, but also an internationally renowned wine-growing area. Connoisseurs can sample outstanding wines from the local area in numerous bars and restaurants around the area, while the Alpine huts on the Seiser Alm will be serving culinary delights to round off the event to mouth-watering perfection.

Around & about

80 years moving to the top ski area Seiser Alm 1938-2018



80 years of the Seiser Alm ski resort. 80 years since the foundation of the Seiser Alm ski resort: So how does one go about turning an isolated leisure area into an internationally beloved holiday destination, and a simple sledge lift into state-of-the-art cable cars? Find out in the special anniversary edition of ALPE. To mark the occasion, a travelling exhibition will be doing the rounds of the villages of the holiday region of the Seiser Alm.

Kässbohrer Pistenbully

In 2019, German company Kässbohrer celebrate the 50th anniversary of the Pistenbully. When company director **Karl Kässbohrer** first saw the motorised precursor to the snowcat over 50 years ago during a holiday on the Seiser Alm, he was inspired to develop the machine further. And that's exactly what he did: He got down to work, and brought us the Pistenbully in 1969. The ingenious entrepreneur, so they say, delivered the first machine straight to the Seiser Alm. In the following years, the Pistenbully range progressed from small snow pushers to state-of-the-art machinery.



PB 120B 1969

Chiara Ferragni



This past Christmas, Italian influencer and fashion blogger **Chiara Ferragni** spent her holidays at the "Alpina Dolomites" on the Seiser Alm along with her husband, rapper Fedez, their child Leo, her parents and her sisters. The Ferragni family have already spent their Christmas ski holiday on the

Seiser Alm a number of times and this year they relaxed to the full once again here in this, in their own words, "very special place". Chiara shared her experiences in the snow with 16 million people on Instagram.



Moritz Hofer

Master coffee roaster **Moritz Hofer** from the coffee roasting company Caroma in Fiè allo Sciliar took second place in the Italian Coffee Roasting Championships at Sigeo, an international trade fair in Rimini. Hofer started out in the coffee industry in 2015, and his responsibilities include an exhaustive knowledge of green coffee and countries of origin, selection, the creation of roast profiles and holding courses.

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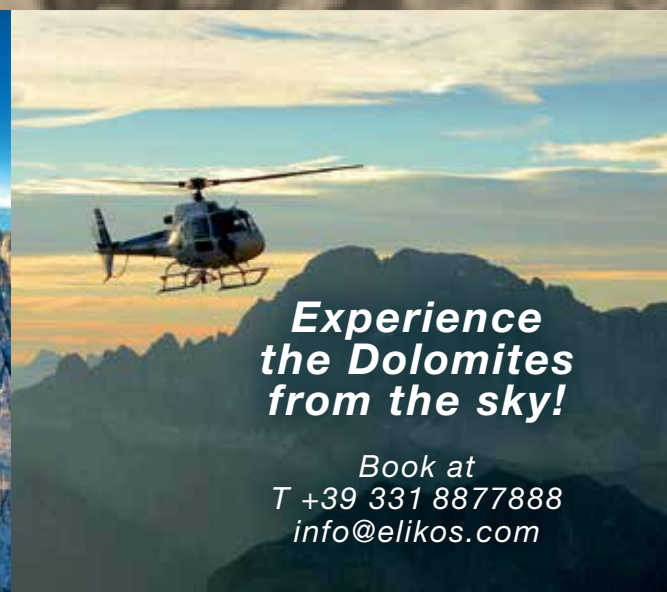


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