

ENGLISH

SUMMER

LUFTSEILBAHN  
**Ebenalp**

Appenzellerland.

appenzell.ch





## EBENALP – AESCHER – WILDKIRCHLI THE CRADLE OF TOURISM IN APPENZELL

For centuries the Wildkirchli area has exerted a singular appeal and is still today one of the most popular tourist destinations in the Appenzellerland.

A cable car transports visitors in comfort from Wasserauen up to Ebenalp. From Ebenalp, a short walk on a well-maintained hiking trail passes through the Wildkirchli Caves to the hermitage and the chapel. The trail then continues eastwards along a rock face, through a wooden gallery, to Berggasthaus Aescher, a mountain inn and restaurant.

The Cave Chapel was established in 1621; the Hermit's House was built in 1658 and offered sanctuary to hermits until 1853. It later became an inn. Today the small museum is a reconstruction of the former Hermit's House and was built in 1972 on the site of the old inn.

The hermits and herdsmen began selling food and drink on Alp Aescher as far back as 1800. During the early 19th century, the mountain chalet gradually evolved into Berggasthaus Aescher, one of the oldest mountain inns in Switzerland.

## PERHAPS THE MOST BEAUTIFUL PLACE IN THE WORLD

Enjoying a spectacular location nestled on a rock face 100 metres high, the mountain hostelry has always been – and continues to be – extremely popular. Indeed, the Aescher was named “Mountain Inn of the Year 2012” by a jury comprising experts from the fields of conservation, architecture, history and the hotel and restaurant industry.

It is also famed on news portals and blogs for its unique beauty. The Huffington Post, the USA's most-read online newspaper, named Berggasthaus Aescher the “world's most interesting restaurant”, while Hollywood star Ashton Kutcher extolled the extraordinary ambience of this stunning location on Facebook.

The Aescher photo (see image, above) taken by Peter Böhi from the Swiss town of Altstätten even adorned the front cover of a book entitled “Destination of a Lifetime” issued by National Geographic. This magazine is renowned for its spectacular photographs of the natural world and is published in 30 languages and 50 countries with a total circulation of 2.5 million copies. It is the oldest monthly journal on the market with an uninterrupted publishing history.



## THE WILDKIRCHLI CAVES

Experience the mystical and mysterious atmosphere of the caves and take a guided tour of past times and thrilling encounters with history.

The trail from the Ebenalp cable car mountain station is undemanding and safe. During your walk, take time to enjoy stunning panoramic views across the scattered hamlets of the Appenzellerland region – and Lake Constance in the distance.

The Wildkirchli Caves are at a height of 1,500 metres above sea level and occupy an area of around 2,000 m<sup>2</sup>. They are karst caves, formed by underground streams over millions of years.

To mark the 60th anniversary of the Ebenalpbahn cable car, the Wildkirchli Caves were discreetly but extensively modernised, with care taken to ensure that this unique prehistoric site lost none of its original character and charm. The path through the caves is considered a transport route of national importance and is complemented by unobtrusively presented information.

The mystical ambience of the Wildkirchli Caves is particularly apparent when the weather is wet. Immerse yourself in an ancient Alpine world and experience the power of nature. The cool quietness of the Wildkirchli Caves has a healing, invigorating quality: to this day they are a place of refuge where visitors can enjoy peace and tranquillity.

## PREHISTORIC FINDS

In 1904 the Wildkirchli Caves became famous owing to finds of prehistoric stone tools, which provided evidence for the first time that man had lived in the Alps during the Palaeolithic Era (45,000 to 30,000 BC). It is presumed that the caves were used by hunters and gatherers during the summer months as a hunting site. In addition to stone tools, the remains of cave bears were also found. All in all, archaeological digs between 1904 and 1908 uncovered the remains of around 800 animals, including the bones and teeth of cave lions, wolves, ibexes, chamois, martens and birds.

Today visitors arriving at the Ebenalp cable car mountain station can admire the complete skeleton of a cave bear, which provides an idea of just how big these ancient creatures actually were.



## GUIDED TOURS

Take a guided tour of past times and thrilling encounters with history.

### Wildkirchli guided tour

Duration: 1 – 1½ hours

Dates and times: On request

Participants: For families and groups of up to 20 persons

Cost: CHF 210 per group (cable car not included)

Start of tour: Cable car valley station in Wasserauen

**Provider:** Appenzellerland Tourismus AI

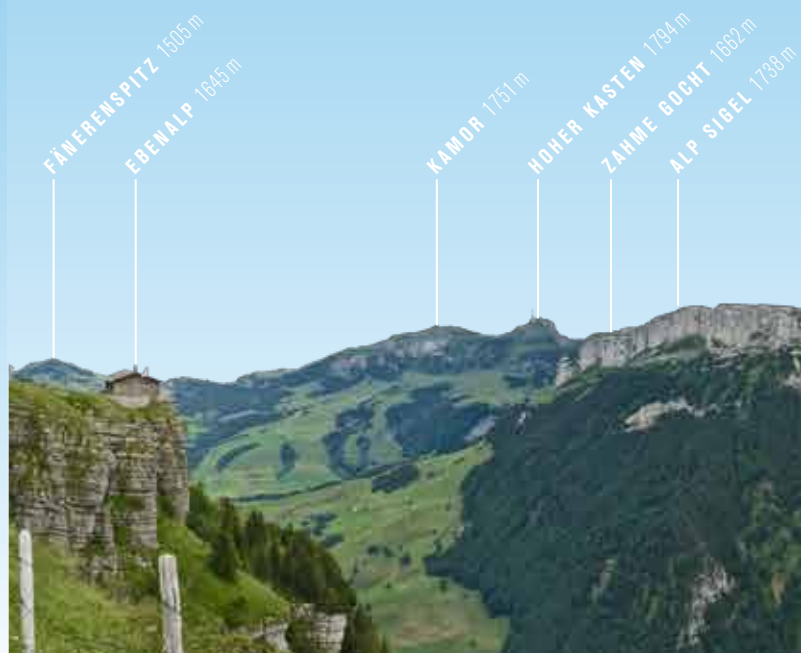
Hauptgasse 4, CH-9050 Appenzell, T 071 788 96 41,

[www.appenzell.info](http://www.appenzell.info), [info@appenzell.ch](mailto:info@appenzell.ch)

## FLYING

With its optimal location and excellent thermals, Ebenalp has become a highly popular meeting place for hang gliders and paragliders.

Ebenalp is eminently suitable for flying. Indeed, only a short flight is required to reach an altitude that is ideal for individual training or simply enjoying the majesty of unpowered flight.





## TANDEM PARAGLIDING

Taking flight as a passenger is a delightful way of experiencing an enthralling world in a different dimension. Make your dream of flying come true with a tandem flight above a breathtaking mountain landscape!

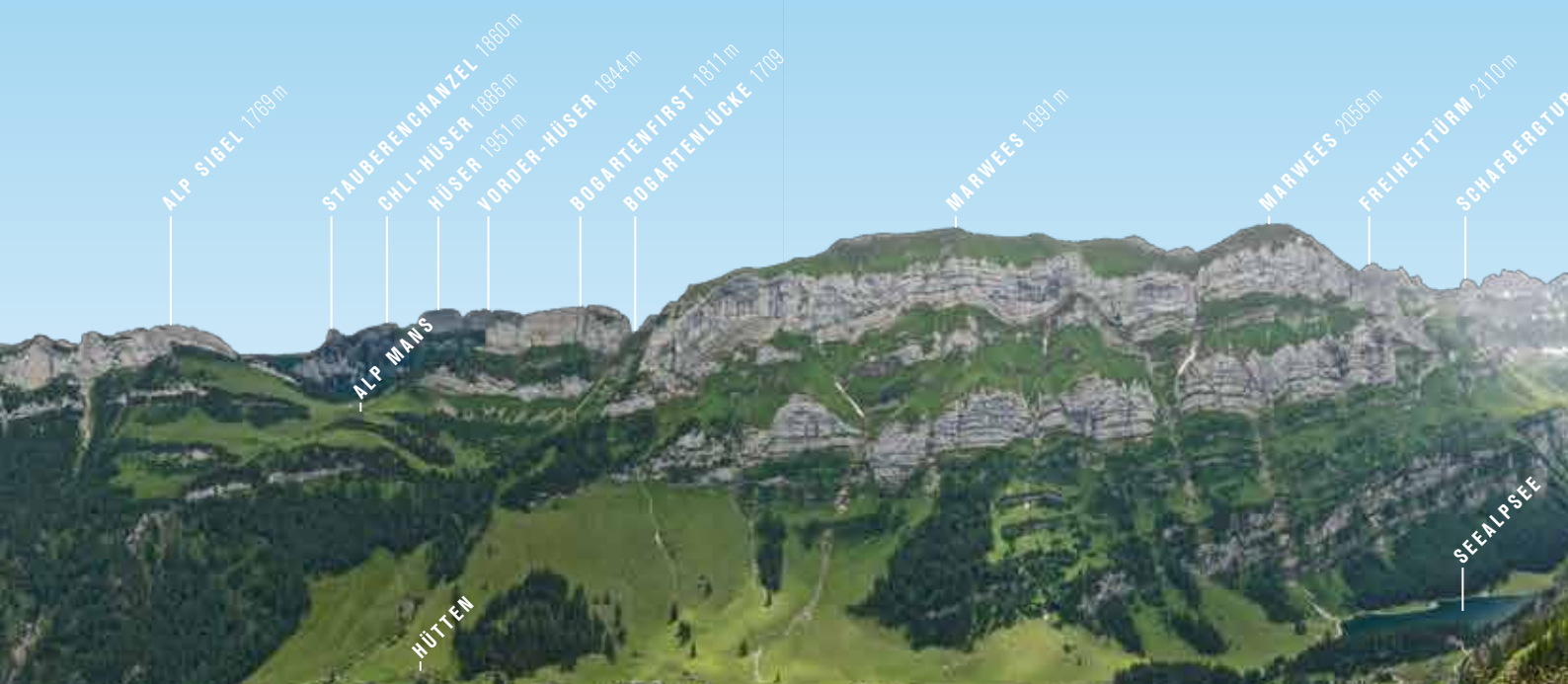
Anyone can enjoy this unique experience during a tandem paragliding flight – no prior experience necessary!

Vouchers for a tandem paragliding flight are a very special gift.

## THE ALPSTEIN MASSIF – A CLIMBER'S PARADISE

For those passionate about climbing, Ebenalp offers in excess of 150 climbing routes of one to three pitches. The rock quality is variable and ranges from very good compact limestone to flaky rock. The climbing itself is frequently technical, with narrow ledges, handholds and holes.

The routes established since 1990 have been created with solid 10 mm mostly stainless anchors and pitons with belay points for abseiling. Few routes feature glued bolts. Protection is generally good to very good.





## ALPINE FLOWERS IN ALL THEIR GLORY

**Experience the splendour and variety of Alpine flora in the Alpine Garden at Berggasthaus Ebenalp.**

A vast number of the Alpine flowers found in Switzerland can be admired here in the Alpine Garden. Many of these plants are threatened species, which is why they are protected. Our aim is to give people the opportunity to admire and appreciate these flowers in their natural environment. The Alpine flowers in the Alpine Garden below Berggasthaus Ebenalp are lovingly looked after by the Sutter family who live in the mountain inn.



## HERMIT'S HOUSE

Visitors to the Hermit's House can view attractive temporary exhibitions focusing on different historical aspects of this important cultural monument.

From the foundation of the hermitage to 1853, the house was occupied by around two dozen laymen, who lived solitary lives in the Wildkirchli as guardians of this holy place. The hermits rang the bell five times each day at prayer times. They were permitted to keep two goats and received butter, cheese and whey from the local herdsmen. After hermit Anton Fässler died when collecting leaves in 1853, the hermitage was no longer occupied, and the "Wildkirchli" inn was subsequently built on the site of the derelict hermit's house.





## A WALKER'S PARADISE IN THE HEART OF THE ALPSTEIN MASSIF

**Whether you prefer a leisurely ramble or a vigorous assault on a summit, up here you can enjoy the breathtaking mountain landscape of the Alpstein massif.**

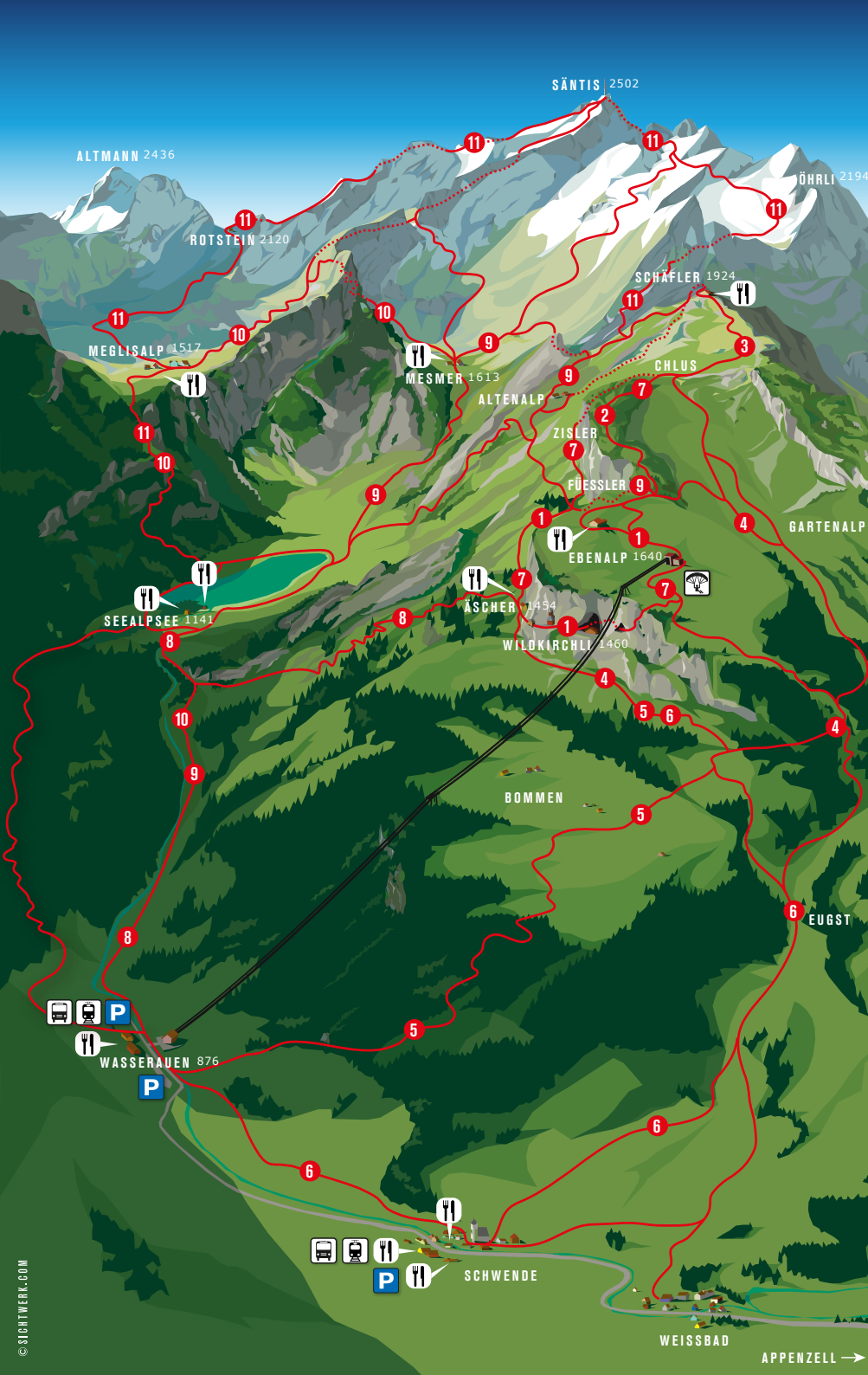
Ebenalp is the ideal starting place for captivating walks in the Alpstein massif. Explore the Appenzellerland at its most beautiful as you pass colourful meadows of Alpine flowers, impressive rock formations and stunning panoramic views.

Stop off at one of the many mountain hostelries around Ebenalp offering delicious food and drink. They also provide excellent accommodation for families, groups and clubs.

## 1644 METRES ABOVE THE CLOUDS

Top up your vitamin D during an autumnal Alpine walk beneath bright blue skies.

Thanks to its altitude and climatic conditions, during the autumn months Ebenalp offers fabulous views of an almost boundless sea of cloud, punctuated by the exposed summits of the Alpstein massif.



## HIKING TRAILS

- 1 Ebnalp - Wildkirchli - Äscher - Ebnalp**  
 Non-strenuous hike from the mountain cable car station,  
 1 h, 2 km
- 2 Ebnalp - Chlus - Ebnalp**  
 Non-strenuous hike from the mountain cable car station,  
 1 h, 2,8 km
- 3 Ebnalp - Chlus - Schäfler - Ebnalp**  
 Non-strenuous hike from the mountain cable car station,  
 2 h, 4,6 km
- 4 Ebnalp - Gartenalp - Wildkirchli - Ebnalp**  
 Non-strenuous hike from the mountain cable car station,  
 1 h 30 min, 2,7 km
- 5 Ebnalp - Wildkirchli - Bommenalp - Blättliweg - Wasserauen**  
 Moderately difficult hike from the mountain cable car station,  
 1 h 45 min, 3,7 km
- 6 Ebnalp - Wildkirchli - Bommenalp - Schwende - Wasserauen**  
 Moderately difficult hike from the mountain cable car station,  
 2 h 30 min, 6 km
- 7 Ebnalp - Chlus - Zisler - Äscher - Wildkirchli - Ebnalp**  
 Challenging hike from the mountain cable car station,  
 2 h, 4 km
- 8 Ebnalp - Wildkirchli - Seealpsee - Wasserauen**  
 Challenging hike from the mountain cable car station,  
 2 h 30 min, 5,4 km
- 9 Ebnalp - Füessler - Altenalp - Mesmer - Seealpsee - Wasserauen**  
 Challenging hike from the mountain cable car station,  
 5 h, 11,7 km
- 10 Ebnalp - Füessler - Altenalp - Mesmer - Meglisalp - Seealpsee - Wasserauen**  
 Alpine hike from the mountain cable car station,  
 6 h, 14,4 km
- 11 Ebnalp - Schäfler - Öhrligrueb - Säntis - Lisengrat - Rotstein - Meglisalp - Wasserauen**  
 Alpine hike from the mountain cable car station,  
 8 h 30 min, 19,5 km





## GASTRONOMY

Sweet dreams. After a vigorous hike, what could be more appealing than an excellent meal at one of our hostelries and a comfortable night in the Alpstein massif?

### **Berggasthaus Ebenalp** 1,640 metres above sea level

- 8 rooms, 17 beds (we reserve the right that we only accept bookings in connection with a dinner)
- Various dormitories with feather duvets for up to 80 occupants
- Open: From May to the end of October and from December to Easter

T 071 799 11 94, [www.gasthaus-ebenalp.ch](http://www.gasthaus-ebenalp.ch), [infos@gasthaus-ebenalp.ch](mailto:infos@gasthaus-ebenalp.ch)

### **Berggasthaus Äscher** 1,454 metres above sea level

- Open: From May to October

T 071 799 11 42, [www.aescher-ai.ch](http://www.aescher-ai.ch), [swiss@aescher-ai.ch](mailto:swiss@aescher-ai.ch)

### **Berggasthaus Schäfli** 1,924 metres above sea level

- 7 rooms, 15 beds
- Various dormitories with feather duvets for up to 70 occupants

T 071 799 11 44, [www.schaeffler.ch](http://www.schaeffler.ch)

Evening trips for groups and clubs at any time on request.

## CABLE CAR

Built in 1955, the cable car between Wasserauen (868 metres above sea level) and Ebenalp (1,644 metres above sea level) transports up to 200,000 visitors every year. This state-of-the-art cable car will whisk you from Wasserauen up to Ebenalp in less than six minutes.

The cabin holds up to 40 persons and runs every 30 minutes.

There is a large car park adjacent to the cable car valley station in Wasserauen. The terminus of Appenzellerbahnen (Appenzell Railways), which operates train services from Gossau and St. Gallen to Wasserauen, is also located here.



## TICKET PRICES

	Single trip	Return trip
Individual ticket	CHF 20.–	CHF 31.–
Groups of 10 or more	CHF 16.–	CHF 25.–
Children	CHF 7.50	CHF 12.–
Schoolchildren	CHF 6.50	CHF 11.–
Children aged up to 6	Free of charge	Free of charge
Dogs	CHF 5.–	CHF 10.–

SBB Half-Fare travel card and GA Half-Fare card valid on standard individual tickets. Services every 30 minutes.

Prices subject to change.

## OPERATING TIMES

For the current operating times of the cable car service, please visit [www.ebenalp.ch](http://www.ebenalp.ch)

## GENERAL INFORMATION

Luftseilbahn Wasserauen-Ebenalp AG (cable car)

T 071 799 12 12

[info@ebenalp.ch](mailto:info@ebenalp.ch), [www.ebenalp.ch](http://www.ebenalp.ch)

Reduced services during maintenance work in November and April and in the event of strong "Föhn" winds.

### Travelling by car

You can reach Wasserauen from Appenzell via Steinegg and Weissbad.

### Travelling by public transport

You can easily reach Wasserauen by public transport via Gossau or St. Gallen.





## IMPORTANT INFORMATION

To keep the mountain environment pristine, please remember to take your rubbish home with you. For your own safety and for the benefit of wildlife, please do not stray from the marked hiking trails.

Footwear suitable for mountain walking is required on all hikes described here. Hiking with children requires particularly careful planning. Children should be secured with a rope on steep trails.

### **Emergency telephone numbers**

Rega (Swiss air rescue service): 1414

Emergencies: 144



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