

PRESS INFORMATION – ALPKULTUR®

Locally strong and with deep roots in the region

AlpKultur® – A future with tradition

Nature, man, Alpine and mountain farming and sustainable tourism influence the whole of Simmental. The locals are proud of their traditions and origins. Behind the term AlpKultur® is an idea to bring Alpine and mountain farming life to guests so that they can experience the forgotten, the present and the future. In Lenk-Simmental, most hotels include the use of cable cars in the accommodation fee, even for a one-night stay. You can see the participating hotels at www.lenk-bergbahnen.ch/inklusive. The attractive children's entertainment program is free of charge.

The Betelberg alpine experience

AlpKultur® has lots of offers and events. For example, the **Betelberg Alpine experience**: On the special gondola ride to Leiterli in Lenk, the cow Mona, the goat Flöckli and the marmot Moritz tell visitors about their everyday life on twelve thematic, lovingly decorated gondolas. The amusing history continues on the journey down into the valley. (*Lenk cable cars were awarded the national «Swiss Mountain Award» by the Swiss Cable Car Association for the AlpKultur® gondola ride.*) Or the unique **Alpine piano**, which is also a part of the Leiterli ski lift. It is worth a visit. At the music station you are definitely allowed to make some noise: Alpine horns, milk churn drums, glockenspiel and other unusual instruments invite visitors to make music. The **Leiterli Alpine playgroup** with bouncy castles, small wooden chalets, which are connected by the Alpine telephone, a slide, climbing pyramid, wobbly beam and webbed swing is a paradise for children. The **Leiterli Alpine loop** also offers information points about Lenk history and the topic of AlpKultur®, in addition to the grandiose panorama. The loop extends the diverse offer of Alpine culture on Betelberg. A quick **Alpine descent** with the Trottibike scooter from Betelberg along the 9km-long route is not just a highlight for children over the age of 12 but also for those who are young at heart.

AlpKultur® – Fun & games

The 7'000 m², mainly wheelchair accessible AlpKultur® Lenkerseeli playground, brings the Alps into the valley. Alpine life is brought from the mountain into the valley by means of a replicated Alp with different play elements, fireplaces and one of the oldest Alpine dairy farms in Obersimmental. All of the playing equipment is made of natural materials, like the zip line, wire suspension bridge, water table, sensory path, hedge maze, climbing frame, wheelchair see-saw, play model cable car, organ pipe coral, several toboggans etc., invite the whole family for fun and games. The popular «Stubeli railway», a miniature steam engine, enriches the AlpKultur® Lenkerseeli playground.

On the Jaunpass above Boltigen on the **AlpKultur® Bruchmandli Jaunpass adventure trail** children are playfully guided through nature, by a pinecone railway to a Tyrolean traverse, a climbing frame to an obstacle course. Illustrated boards provide information about nature and the surroundings on the Jaunpass, and explain the story of Bruchmandli, the small dwarf who has lived on the pass for many years.

Discover local products and interesting places in Lenk in a playful way. On the **Alpine Catching** scavenger hunt you have to find the right place and the right answers with the clues.

AlpKultur® events

The cows from Simmental are world famous. They are the main attractions at the **Äplerfest** Alpine festival, held every October. In addition to various market stalls, and the hourly «moves», Miss Lenk is then elected. Visitors select the prettiest cow from the 25 finalists of the cattle viewings of the week before. Here different values are key than for the experts. The radiance and the shape of the horns play a more important roll!

After four months on the summer pastures, the cows of the dairy farmers return back to the valley from Dürrenwald in September. The focus of the **St. Stephan Alpine descent** is on the 120 or so cows that have been carefully decorated with flowers and bands and the proud Alpine dairy farmers in their traditional attire. The event is rounded off by Alpine horns and yodelling, folk music and diverse market stands with local products.

At the start of September, visitors can experience the brisk bustle of the market at the start of September next to the train station in Boltigen, when the **Boltigen farmers' market** is held. Various market stands as well as a diverse supporting program such as cheese-making, a horse-drawn cart journey or a children's parade round off the farmers' market.

In summer and autumn, Lenk-Simmental tourism offers an **AlpKultur® reception** with the chance to try regional **AlpKultur®** products from Lenk Milch, the mountain butcher's Schläppi, Swiss Alpine Herbs, Simmentaler Bier and the bakery Gubeli Stephan. Folk entertainment and a petting zoo during high season and round off the popular guest reception.

AlpKultur® hiking

AlpnessTrail – The relaxing hiking path. The 13 attractive stages lead from Boltigen via Lenk to Lauenen, and via Saanen and Jaunpass back to Boltigen. The route can also be completed in individual stages.

If you would like to find out exciting and surprising information about the architecture, AlpKultur®, baths and hot springs as well as the fauna and flora in Simmental, you can do so at talks and adventures and on the guided **excursions with hiking guides**. In Blankenburg the guided tour on the «house circular sentier» takes place, organized by the tourist office St. Stephan. Along the row of historical farmhouse facades, visitors can find out more about the history of farming in Simmental, before the tour ends with a delicious AlpKultur® treat.

A small challenge for any hiking fan and hiking family is the **AlpKultur® Bergbezien pass**. On the hiking pass, which is part of the «Summer experiences» brochure, each visit to a mountain hut is acknowledged with refreshments provided by the host. If 8 of the 19 mountain baths in Simmental are visited, an attractive present awaits.

A dizzying experience is offered by the 111-metre-long and 111-metre-high **suspension bridge** across the Morgetenbach gorge, which can be visited starting from Weissenburg or Oberwil. The historical wooden ladders in the ascent from the gorge have been replaced by metal stairs. These building measures and the restoration of the dry-stone walls have brought the historic baths route back to life and make them accessible against for hiking tourism.

The farmhouses in Simmental characterise the appearance of our countryside and can be admired in the whole valley. The **Simmental house trail**, from Wimmis to Boltigen or vice versa, as well as the Obersimmental house trail, from Boltigen to Lenk or vice versa, generally follows the Bernese hiking paths and is marked with brown signs. Information is available at www.hauswege.ch.

Over 5'000 years ago, «Schnidi» the stone age man lived up in the mountains of Lenk. Nowadays, the Simmental impresses us with its diversity from the beech mixed forest in Nidersimmental up to the ice of the de la Plaine Morte glacier at the border with the Canton of Valais. Nature photographer

Ernst Zbären tours since more than 75 years in the Simmental, he knows and snows interesting stories on his **Simmental photograph events**.

Experience Alpine life

Dairy farmer for a while: The **Alpine experience day** offers you the chance to slip into the role of an Alpine farmer. Over one or two days, the dairy farming family can be accompanied up on the mountain, or helped with any work, be it cheese-making, milking, haymaking, gathering cows etc. The diversity of the AlpKultur® offers is currently being expanded. This includes the **Alpine cheese factory tour** (from the middle/end of June to August) or «owning» a selected cow for an alpine season (**cow rental**).

AlpKultur®: Traditional crafts

At workshops the techniques of the Simmental crafts of **silhouette cutting** can be learned and experienced under professional guidance.

The museums Agensteinhaus in Erlenbach notify and present visitors the history of Simmental, cattle breeding, crafts or an unbelievable journey in time through the AlpKultur® Simmental crafts.

AlpKultur® herbs & plants

Discover, see and experience over 100 native and non-native healing plants. At the Weiler Adlemsried farm in Boltigen on a sun terrace over the Simmental lies the idyllic and diverse garden of **medicinal plant garden**. The medicinal plant garden will let children's hearts in Tun flourish (ointments, massage oil and herbal salt) can take part, settle down with a coffee/aromatic herbal tea and cake or on a deckchair.

Experiencing herbs in Simmental: The aroma of sun-soaked Alpine herbs from controlled biological farms in the Bernese Oberland hits visitors to the production site of SAH (Swiss Alpine Herbs).

AlpKultur® culinary

On the **AlpKultur® culinary trail** on Stockhorn, a three-course meal can be enjoyed at three different guest houses. On the hike from the Stockhorn summit to the Chrindi middle station, refreshments and one course are served. It is a combination of exercise and delicious regional culinary treats.

Press Service / Lenk-Simmental Tourism

Further information is available at www.lenk-simmental.ch/alpkultur

*Further basic media texts and Images of Lenk-Simmental can be downloaded from the following link:
www.lenk-simmental.ch/en/footer/media*

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