

## Summer in the Ötztal

### A Mountain Novel in 4 Parts

#### Part 3: Concert for a hundred water voices

My best friend Heike sighs: "Pure bliss ... Inge, I am so happy that you have chosen the Ötztal Valley as our summer holiday destination!" We are almost floating in the 36°C warm saltwater bowl of Längenfeld's Aqua Dome Spa Center while listening to underwater music and nice tunes. A revitalizing reflexology massage from top to toe was already on the program. This must be the heaven of rest and relaxation!

"Maybe we should go and have a look at the kids?" worries Heike. "Oh no, Claudia and Niki are perfectly looked after in the kids area. They have never seen such a big, 90 meter long water slide before," I answer. "And what's more, the moment our sports fanatics leave the Cave Sauna they certainly prefer romping around with the kids while we enjoy peace and silence in the Spa Nirvana..." The fact is that my husband Peter and his best friend Markus could be easily compared with a watch's balance spring.

At the end of this truly relaxing day in Tirol's premium spa center we enjoy a delicious dinner menu at the Spa Bistro. Peter and Markus have already made new plans: a few days ago we had great fun in the white water chute of Sölden's Freizeit Arena leisure center. This experience inspired our two sportsmen... Markus announces: "Hey folks, we have to try white water rafting!" Heike is shocked about his idea: "You really want to risk your neck und take us even with you?"

"Don't worry," replies Peter in a calming way, "Ötztal's expert Outdoor Companies provided us with all the necessary information: they are perfectly

equipped, guaranteeing all safety standards. They created a special rafting program for families." Even for eight and ten year old kids? Markus checks the brochure again: "Oh sorry... children under 12 years are not allowed to participate in rafting tours. What a pity!"

Claudia and Niki are very disappointed. But our holiday expert Heike saves the day: "I found a great alternative for us!" She whispers something into her daughter's ear and only a second later she is again all smiles: "Cool! Niki and Inge, we will climb the scenic Stuiben Falls together with an experienced hiking guide!" Oh my God, I am scared: Heike and I made a climbing course twelve years ago and I can't even remember the basic techniques. I am definitely of the opinion that the giant Stuiben Falls are equally spectacular if you take the normal walking path across the mighty gorge.

Thinking it over again and again, I came to the conclusion that we are in a good physical shape – and maybe our body would remember some of the climbing basics. What's more: waterfall climbing is not as sensational as it sounds. The path is perfectly secured and offers the most breathtaking vistas and nature experiences you can imagine. Our certified mountain guide takes us safely across the rushing mountain waters, explaining all the necessary details of our climbing tour which is really suitable for the whole family.

After this infinite number of adventurous highlights I proposed something less exciting but equally beautiful. Let's listen to the quiet waters of the Ötztal! We rent a rowing boat on the shores of Lake Piburger See and indulge in the peace and silence of the crystal clear mountain waters embedded in the stunning Alpine scenery. Heike dives into the world of Tirolean legends and myths: "Legend has it that a giant dragon lives on the bottom of the lake. Sometimes he emerges from the water and colors the lakeside meadows red with his poisonous breathe. "But it's not Tabaluga?" asks Claudia. "No, it's only a legend," answers Niki. Markus, our single, is keen on following the tracks of more authentic and real stories and facts about the Ötztal valley. Grinning ear to ear, I have a great idea: "Tomorrow at breakfast I will present you my instruction schedule."

**Next Part (4): Cows, spotted nutcrackers and magic herbs**

(Leisurely pasture hikes, theme trails amid the Nature Park and other pleasures)

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