



## HEALING IN THE HILLS

### The Thermal Waters & Grand Spas of Austria - Bad Gastein, Bad Hofgastein & Bad Ischl

October 19-22, 2016  
Global Wellness Summit



Join us as we explore and learn about the thermal waters in this very historic region of Austria. Our tour will be led by **historian, professor and author, David Clay Large who has written "The Grand Spas of Central Europe: A History of Intrigue, Politics, Art and Healing."** David is a senior fellow at the Institute of European Studies, University of California, Berkeley. He has taught at Smith College, Yale University and Montana State University.

As part of our tour, we will meet with executives of leading thermal water resorts Alpentherme, FelsenTherme and Eurothermen Resort who operate the baths in these areas. And for those who enjoy yoga and indigenous healers, we will have the opportunity to experience both in Bad Gastein.

#### October 19, Wednesday

**5.30pm:** This afternoon you will be transferred after the end of the Global Wellness Summit by private coach from Kitzbühel to Bad Gastein. The drive takes approximately 2 hours.

#### **Welcome to Bad Gastein!**

Upon arrival in Bad Gastein, guests will be taken to the Hotel Miramonte for check in.

#### **Hotel Miramonte**

Reitlpromenade 3, 5640 Bad Gastein, Austria  
Phone: + 43 6434 25770  
<http://www.hotelmiramonte.com/>



*Dinner at your leisure at our hotel.*

#### **Evening at Hotel Miramonte.**

#### October 20, Thursday

**Morning yoga** at Hotel Miramonte

**Breakfast** at Hotel Miramonte

**Spend the day at leisure enjoying Bad Gastein. You may choose to hike or enjoy a visit to the FelsenTherme City Spa. (Admission, bathrobe and towel included).**

**For those who are interested, you may do a walking tour of the area with David Clay Large.**

**Your tour includes a private Radon Bath at our hotel which may be scheduled in advance of your arrival.**

**5.30pm** This evening we will enjoy cocktails with David Clay Large (author, historian and host of our tour) where we'll learn more about the waters of Bad Gastein & Bad Hofgastein. We will be joined by Ike Ikrath, owner of Miramonte, Petra Leiminger CEO of the Felsentherme (the famous public Thermal Spa in Bad Gastein) and the CEO of the tourist board, Doris Hoehenwarter who will tell us more about what makes Bad Gastein the „Fountain of Youth!“

**Dinner at your leisure in BadGastein.**

*Dinner recommendation:*

**Ginger & Gin**

<http://www.gingerandgin.at/>

*Asian inspired-Alpine styled eccentric restaurant*

**Evening at Hotel Miramonte.**

October 21, Friday

**Breakfast** at Hotel Miramonte

**9.30am:** We will be driven by coach to neighboring Bad Hofgastein. The drive takes approximately 10 minutes.

Enjoy the morning at the **Kurzentrum Alpentherme Gastein in Bad Hofgastein (Admission, bathrobe and towel included).**

Lunch at your leisure at Alpentherme or in town.

**2.00pm:** We will be driven by coach to Bad Ischl. The drive takes approximately 2 hours.

**Welcome to Bad Ischl!**

Upon arrival in Bad Ischl, guests will be taken to the Villa Seilern Vital Resort for check in.

**Villa Seilern Vital Resort**

Tänzlasse 11, 4820 Bad Ischl, Austria

Phone: +43 6132 24132

<http://www.villaseilern.at/en>



Spend the rest of the afternoon on own enjoying Bad Ischl. You may use the pool, saunas, steams and other facilities at the hotel or for those who are interested, you may do a walking tour of the area with David Clay Large.

**6.00p** This evening, over cocktails in the hotel bar, we will enjoy a talk by the management of EurothemenResorts, operators of the baths in Bad Ischl. We will learn more about the special properties of this salt water, its curative powers and the operations of this thermal resort.

**Dinner** at your leisure at Villa Seilern or in town.

### **Evening at Villa Seilern Vital Resort.**

October 22, Saturday

**Breakfast** at Villa Seilern

11am (time to be confirmed) This morning we will be treated to a “Back of the House” tour at EuroTherme City Spa with General Manager, **Andreas Nöhammer**, who will explain more about their operations.

After our tour, you may spend the rest of the morning enjoying Bad Ischl. Enjoy a visit to EuroTherme facilities – steams, saunas and pools. Your Healing in the Hills Tour fee includes your admission, one bathrobe and one towel rental per person. For those who are interested, you may do a walking tour of the area with David Clay Large.

**3.30pm:** Group transfer by private luxury coach to Munich Airport for departing flights.

### **PRICING:**

**Single occupancy: EURO 951.00 per person**

**Double occupancy: EURO 791.00 per person**

#### Included in Pricing:

- *2 nights accommodations at Hotel Miramonte Bad Gastein*
- *1 night accommodations at Villa Seilern Vital Resort*
- *Buffet breakfast daily*
- *Complimentary WiFi*
- *Complimentary access to SPA at Hotel Miramonte and Villa Seilern*
- *One Radon thermal bath per person once during stay at Hotel Miramonte*
- *Discount off all spa treatments at both hotels*
- *All private coach & driver services as per itinerary for transfers from Kitzbuhel to Bad Gastein, Bad Gastein to Bad Hofgastein, Bad Hofgastein to Bad Ischl, and group transfer to Munich Airport for departure*
- *Bottled water on coach*
- *Full day entrance ticket to FelsenTherme City Spa in Bad Gastein, Kurzentrum Alpentherme Gastein in Bad Hofgastein and EuroTherme City Spa in Bad Ischl includes one bathrobe and one towel rental per person, per public bath*
- *All local taxes and VAT*

**Suites available upon request; subject to availability for an additional charge.**

We highly recommend purchasing trip cancellation insurance [www.travelex-insurance.com](http://www.travelex-insurance.com).

To reserve your spot, please email Sallie Fraenkel at [sallie@mindbodyspiritnet.com](mailto:sallie@mindbodyspiritnet.com)

**Please note:**

This trip is quoted in EURO. USD pricing is determined at time of payment using the current exchange rate offered by American Express Foreign Currency services. **For payments by credit card please add 3% merchant fee to the total. Please ask your Boutique agent for the rate of exchange before proceeding with payment.** A 25% non-refundable deposit is due at time of booking. Final payment is due 30 days prior to arrival or if it is already within 30 days, then full payment is due at this time.

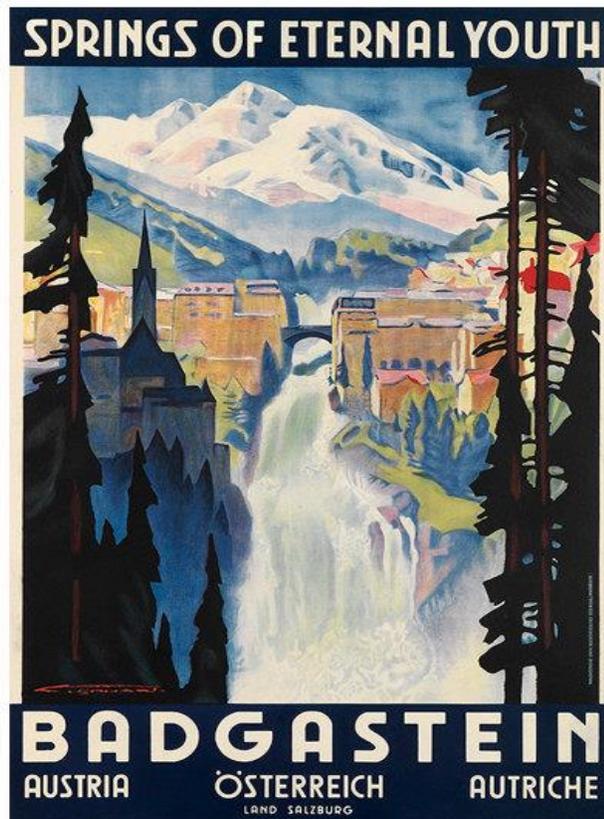
**CANCELLATION POLICY**

Cancellation up to 60 days prior to arrival	25% of total tour price is non-refundable
Cancellation 30-59 calendar days prior to arrival	50 % of total tour price is non-refundable
Cancellation within 30 calendar days prior to arrival	100% of total tour price is non-refundable

**More background on the historic thermal baths we will be visiting:**

**Bad Gastein**

Bad Gastein, perhaps the best-known of the grand alpine Kurorte (spa towns), came to prominence in the



early sixteenth century when the Swiss polymath Paracelsus, that crusading pioneer of holistic medicine and passionate advocate of mineral-bath healing, touted the region's waters as the perfect antidote to all manner of disorders, from gout to goiters. (A statue of Paracelsus in downtown Gastein stands as testimony to that great doctor's contribution to the community.) Gastein's radon gas-infused waters, gushing forth in a spectacular alpine setting, generated down through the ages a growing contingent of loyal patrons who trusted in the town's self-proclaimed status as "*die Quelle ewiger Jugend*" (fountain of eternal youth). Among these enthusiasts was Sigmund Freud, who sought (albeit fruitlessly) to arrest the spread of his throat and jaw cancer by wallowing summer after summer in Gastein's radon baths. At the height of its popularity in the nineteenth century, Gastein served as a center not only of healing and wellness but also of summit diplomacy and high culture. Prussia's Otto von Bismarck outfoxed his Austrian adversaries while taking the alpine air and waters along with his sovereign, King Wilhelm I. (Visitors today can admire the old wooden bench from which Bismarck himself admired the inspirational mountain scenery.) Franz Schubert composed his *Gasteiner Symphonie* in a nod to the spa's role as artistic muse. By the early twentieth century the most well-heeled of the town's cosmopolitan healing-seekers could take lodging in the Grand Hotel d'Europe, at that time perhaps the most modern and sumptuous hostelry in the entire world. This majestically situated pile of stone put the international spa community on notice that there was not only *healing* in those Austrian hills, but luxury and high-living as well. The same is true today—though not, alas, at the Grand Hotel d'Europe, which ceased operating in 1988. On the other hand, this fabulous building still fruitfully serves visitors to the area because it now houses Bad Gastein's excellent historical museum and is the starting point for multilingual tours of the town's bath complexes and other attractions.

## **Bad Hofgastein**

As Bad Gastein declined somewhat in cachet and clientele in the post-World War II years, the old spa-town's neighbor to the north, Bad Hofgastein, assumed a leading role in the area's hospitality and leisure-time industry by dint of immediate proximity to that new vein of "white gold" in the surrounding hills: snow. As its name suggests, alpine skiing was an invention of this region, which boasted the world's first international ski school and largest ski-jump—a marvel rendered instantly famous in 1922 when a competitor jumped over forty meters and lived to tell the tale. Like its more famous neighbor to the south, Bad Hofgastein was blessed with mineral hot springs of its own, and, in keeping with its determination to keep up with the times, introduced some of the most modern and innovative thermal-bath facilities in the world (up-dated versions of these can be enjoyed today). These days, winter visitors to this lovely alpine spa/ski town can indulge in that ultimate sybaritic luxury: soaking in a hot mineral bath after a long cold day on the slopes. Summer visitors can combine that same soaking experience with sweaty mountain hikes, for Bad Hofgastein, like the rest of the Gastein Valley, is laced with dozens of *Wanderwege* (walking trails) for adepts of all abilities. This elegant smallish town is home also to some of the area's best restaurants, cafés, shops, and sports outfitters. The bar at the posh Grand Park Hotel is the best place to see—should one be so inclined to see—the swaggering Russian oligarchs and their molls who are now a mainstay, and a bane, of the region's priciest establishments. A short excursion definitely worth making is to the village cemetery, one of the most beautiful in the Alps. Here one can see the final resting places not only of locals but also of health pilgrims for whom the vaunted water-cure apparently didn't quite work out.

## Bad Ischl

All the grand Austrian spas attracted high-level nobles and European monarchs as regular cure-guests, but in the nineteenth century Bad Ischl assumed a commanding position in this domain by becoming the permanent summer residence of Kaiser Franz Josef and his beautiful Bavarian-born bride Elisabeth (“Sisy”). As a wedding gift from his dotting mother, Franz Josef received a Biedermeier-style villa and spacious park just outside Ischl, to which the imperial pair repaired every summer year after year. Husband Franz prized the Ischl villa as a precious bolt-hole from the pressures of court-life in Vienna and as an ideal jumping-off place for hunting trips into the surrounding mountains. Soon the villa’s walls were covered floor to ceiling with glassy-eyed animal heads and rustic antler displays. Sisy, for her part, converted part of her bedroom in the villa into a home-gymnasium, where she exercised frantically to maintain her fabled “wasp-waist.” Both Sisy’s gym and Franz’s game-heads can be admired by visitors to Ischl today, for the Kaiser-Villa is now a public museum. Viewable too is Franz Josef’s manly study in which, on July 28, 1914, the emperor signed Austria-Hungary’s declaration of war on Serbia—payback for the assassination exactly one month earlier of nephew Franz Ferdinand, and signal for the onset of what would soon segue into World War I.

But if Bad Ischl has dark associations with the wholesale decimation of beast and man, it was and is foremost a place of healing and artistic creativity. Like Bad Gastein, it abounded in mineral hot-springs that brought thousands of curists every summer to an alpine region prized for natural beauty and health-giving mountain air. Even more than Gastein, Ischl attracted noted artists: Austrian literary giants like Franz Grillparzer, Johann Nestroy, and Arthur Schnitzler; symphonic composers like Johannes Brahms and Gustav Mahler. Schnitzler loved Ischl for its natural splendors, using it as a haven for summer writing and weekly bicycle rides into the neighboring woods during which he stimulated body and mind via invigorating trysts with lady riders. Brahms, for his part, chose Ischl as his favored summer refuge in the early 1880s and again in his declining years between 1889 and 1896. He too prized the region for its scenic majesty and tranquility. Taking inspiration from the natural environment, he composed the last dozen of his great works in this beguiling place. Gustav Mahler, who like Brahms came up with musical ideas by communing with nature, emulated the writer Schnitzler in using Ischl as a base for heroically vigorous bike rides through the entire Salzkammergut. Finally, in its capacity as environmental muse to musicians, Bad Ischl reached an apogee of sorts by becoming the major alpine outpost for Vienna’s frothy operetta scene from the late nineteenth century through the 1930s. No less a figure than operetta king Franz Lehár made Ischl his primary residence, overseeing performances of his own and other composers’ works and building a stately villa on the River Traun. (The villa is now a museum, a sacred site for Lehár disciples the world over, much as Bayreuth’s Villa-Wahnfried is for Richard Wagner zealots.)

These days, visitors to Ischl can enjoy an embarrassment of riches: healthful soaks in a variety of thermal baths and other wellness facilities; calorie-rich imbibing of *Kuchen mit Schlag* (cakes with whipped cream) at the historic Konditorei Zauner; musical and theatrical performances at the newly renovated *Trinkhalle*. Habsburg buffs can even follow a designated “Sisy Trail,” stopping at inspirational points along the way without necessarily concluding the journey at Lake Geneva, as Sisy herself did at the hands of a deranged assassin in 1898.

**To reserve your spot, please email Sallie Fraenkel at [sallie@mindbodyspiritnet.com](mailto:sallie@mindbodyspiritnet.com)**