



FOUR NIGHTS · THE BAVARIAN ALPS

Silence, Scored

Schloss Elmau, between the Zugspitze and the Karwendel

WHY THIS RETREAT

A hall in the mountains, and a valley that listens

Schloss Elmau has put concerts, writers and thinkers in a hidden Alpine valley for over a century. Four nights with a clear arc: listen, climb, move, rest. Every guide, table and seat is arranged quietly in the background.

I

Rare by design

A valley hidden far from everything, yet an hour from Munich.

III

Minds, not just bodies

A private walk through a concert hall, and an evening with a writer.

II

Things most leaders have not done

A cold mountain creek at sunrise, a king's house at 1,866 metres, a movement language built for non-dancers.

IV

Considered evenings

Two Michelin stars, served without ceremony.



Between Zugspitze and Karwendel

The Elmau Valley lies below the UNESCO-listed King's House on Schachen, near Garmisch-Partenkirchen. The house was built between 1914 and 1916 as a cultural retreat, rebuilt in 2007, and has hosted the G7 summit twice.



The valley

Open meadows below the Wetterstein range, with no road through.



The Summit Pavilion

A glass-walled room for long breakfasts and slow afternoons.



The Badehaus Spa

One of six spas and nine pools, this one for adults only.



DAY 0 · ARRIVE

Into the valley

Munich is an hour away, Innsbruck forty-five minutes.

16:00

Arrival and Tea

Hosted by the Schloss Elmau team

Guests are met on arrival and shown to their rooms, then tea in a library lounge with the mountains outside.

Why: the valley is hidden away, so arriving slowly sets the tone.

19:45

A First Dinner

Led by the Schloss Elmau kitchen

A relaxed table in one of the house restaurants, with the evening left open.

Why: nothing scheduled afterwards, by design.

18:00

The Bookstore and Libraries

Led by the Schloss Elmau bookstore team

A first hour in the bookstore and libraries, which are curated to be read across four generations.

Why: a house that reads as much as it listens.

The hall, the creek and an evening concert

Sound first, in every register.

07:30

Ice Bathing at the Nature Spa

Led by Johannes Mikenda, wellbeing expert

Guided cold-water immersion in the Ferchenbach, the mountain creek beside the Nature Spa, with a sauna to warm up.

Why: a cold start sharpens a day of listening.

15:30

Food for Thought

Led by the Schloss Elmau bookstore team

An hour with a bookseller among the shelves, then a chair in one of the libraries.

Why: the house's picks, chosen by people who read.

11:00

Behind the Concert Hall

Led by Sarah Kesting, Artistic Director

A private walk through the hall where up to 150 concerts a year take place, from the stage to the stalls.

Why: to see the room before it fills.

20:30

An Evening in the Concert Hall

Led by the artists of the season

A concert chosen from the season's programme, in a hall known for its acoustics.

Why: music is the house's oldest tradition.



A king's house, then two stars

Up to the Wetterstein, and a table worth the legs.

08:00

The King's Trail to Schachen

Led by a Schloss Elmau mountain guide

About three and a half hours up from the hotel to King Ludwig II's house at 1,866 metres, a guided visit of the interior and lunch at the mountain lodge beside it.

Why: a royal retreat built on a ridge, now a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

20:00

Dinner at IKIGAI

Led by Christoph Rainer, Executive Chef, with sommelier Marie-Helen Krebs

French and Japanese-inspired dishes built on a few exact components, paired with wines by the sommelier named Michelin Germany's Sommelier of the Year 2025.

Why: two Michelin stars, in a room that is deliberately relaxed.

17:00

The Badehaus and the Hamam

Led by the Badehaus spa team

An adults-only spa and an Oriental hamam in the Hideaway, with an hour for nothing else.

Why: the legs deserve it.

Movement, meadows and a good book

Slower than yesterday, with more to say.

09:30

A Gaga Class

Led by the Schloss Elmau Gaga teachers

Gaga is the movement language created by choreographer Ohad Naharin. No experience needed, no steps to get right.

Why: a first for most people: dance as sensation, not performance.

16:30

A Swim in Lake Ferchensee

Led by the Schloss Elmau sports team

Walk, jog or ride to the lake for a swim in the warmer months, or a loop around it at any time.

Why: a clear mountain lake, three kilometres from the hotel.

12:30

Lunch at the Elmauer Alm

Led by the Elmauer Alm team

A forty-minute climb to an alpine lodge at 1,200 metres, built in 1924, for Bavarian classics and a view of the Wetterstein.

Why: the walk is the appetiser.

20:00

An Evening with an Author

Led by an invited author

A reading and conversation with a writer from the season's programme, in English where the programme allows.

Why: the house has always put ideas in the room.





DAY 4 · DEPART

Slowly, then home

Nothing before breakfast, unless you want it.

08:30

A German History

Led by the Schloss Elmau team

A short walk through how a 1916 philosopher's reading retreat became a concert hall, a hotel and a G7 venue.

Why: the story explains the programme.

10:00

Breakfast and Farewells

Hosted by the Schloss Elmau team

A long breakfast, then transfers to Munich or Innsbruck at each guest's own departure time.

Why: a gentle close.

WHO YOU WILL MEET

The house, by name



Christoph Rainer

EXECUTIVE CHEF, IKIGAI

Two Michelin stars and five Gault&Millau toques.



Sarah Kesting

ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

Shapes the programme of concerts, readings and festivals.



Johannes Mikenda

WELLBEING EXPERT

Leads ice bathing at the Nature Spa.



Marie-Helen Krebs

SOMMELIER, IKIGAI

Michelin Germany Sommelier of the Year 2025.



GOOD TO KNOW

How the days run

Getting here

Munich is about an hour by road and Innsbruck about forty-five minutes. Garmisch-Partenkirchen is the nearest town.

The programme

Concerts, readings and festivals follow the house calendar, so evenings are fixed once the dates are set.

Weather

The valley is alpine. The hike, lake and lodge have indoor alternatives in the spa, the libraries and the restaurants.

Seasons

Summer and early autumn open the mountain paths and the King's House; winter turns the days to skiing and the spa.

See you in the valley.

Photography: Schloss Elmau (official images).