

# Farmer's tales, weather lore days & folk beliefs in the Lech Valley

What the sky once revealed still offers guidance today: 'Lostage', the Rauhnächte, traditional weather lore and religious feast days once formed the calendar of the Lechtal people. Life followed the signs of nature, trusted in folk wisdom, experience, and the recur-

ring rhythm of the seasons. And even though the world - and the climate - may have changed, here in the Lechtal, we can still feel it: the old rhythm. One that does not shout, but gently whispers: Look closely, listen deeply, everything has its time.

## JANUARY

'WINTER MONTH'

*If there is no winter until Epiphany, none will follow.*

### FOLK WEATHER DAYS & FESTIVE HOLIDAYS

#### CHRISTMAS AND NEW YEAR'S EVE (RAUHNÄCHTE)

- 01/01 New Year's Day
- 02/01 Caspar
- 03/01 Melchior
- 04/01 Balthasar
- 05/01 Perchten Night
- 06/01 Epiphany (Feast of the Three Kings)

## FEBRUARY

'HORNUNG'

*If St Valentine brings lots of rain, spring will be even wetter again.*

### FOLK WEATHER DAYS & FESTIVE HOLIDAYS

01/02 Candlemas  
*Candlemas marks the end of the Christmas season.*

- 03/02 St Blaise's Day
- 14/02 Valentine's Day

## MARCH

'LENZMONAT'

*If St Joseph brings fair weather, the year will be light and better. If not – expect a gloomy lot!*

### FOLK WEATHER DAYS & FESTIVE HOLIDAYS

- 19/03 St Joseph's Day  
*Regional holiday in Tyrol (Austria)*
- 21/03 astronomical & calendar beginning of spring  
*Spring Equinox*

**Last Sunday in March**  
Start of Daylight Saving Time  
*D'Uhr wird um a Stund' vuar/voar g'stell't.*  
*[The clock goes forward one hour.]*

## JULY

'MONTH OF HAY'

*Like the weather at St Margaret's, the same for another four weeks.*

### FOLK WEATHER DAYS & FESTIVE HOLIDAYS

- 22/07 St Margaret's Day

*In the Lech Valley, the first hay cut in early summer is called 'Hoamha'; the second in August 'Gruamat'. Both mark important times in the farming year - but whether the fragrant mountain hay can be brought in dry, is often decided by the weather alone.*

## AUGUST

'HARVEST MONTH'

*Around Bartlmä the snow over the yoke!*

### FOLK WEATHER DAYS & FESTIVE HOLIDAYS

- 05/08 St Oswald

15/08 Assumption of Mary  
*'High Women's Day' and start of the 'Frauendreißiger'*

- 24/08 St Bartolomew's Day

## SEPTEMBER

'AUTUMN MONTH'

*Nice weather on St Michael's Day winter may be quite long.*

### FOLK WEATHER DAYS & FESTIVE HOLIDAYS

- 08/09 Birth of the Virgin Mary

22/09 astronomical and calendar day  
Start of autumn  
*Autumn equinox*

29/09 St Michael  
*Mid/end of September End of the alpine pasture season Alpine cattle drives ('Almauftrieb')*



**Frauendreißiger** - the time of healing herbs

From 15 August to 15 September, a very special time begins in the Lech Valley: the Frauendreißiger. For centuries, this period has been considered ideal for collecting of medicinal and culinary herbs - because this is when their effects are said to be at their strongest.

## OCTOBER

'WINE MONTH'

*October sky without a star likes warm ovens.*

### FOLK WEATHER DAYS & FESTIVE HOLIDAYS

- 1st Sunday in October Thanksgiving
- 26/10 Austrian bank holidays

- 31/10 All Saints' Eve

**Last Sunday in October**  
End of summer time

*D'Uhr wird um a Stund' zrug g'stell't.*  
*[The clock is set back by one hour]*

## NOVEMBER

'WINDE MONTH'

*Cold and clear around all souls' Day, makes everything rigid at Christmas.*

### FOLK WEATHER DAYS & FESTIVE HOLIDAYS

- 01/11 All Saints' Day
- 02/11 All Souls' Day
- 03/11 St Hubert's Day

- 11/11 St Martin / Martini

*On St Martin's Day, according to popular belief, the can waterfall dries up. (Doserwasserfall)*

## DECEMBER

'CHRISTMONTH'

*Christmas day clear - let's hope for a good year.*

### FOLK WEATHER DAYS & FESTIVE HOLIDAYS

- 04/12 St Barbara
- 05/12 St Nicholas' night = Rauhnacht
- 06/12 St Nicholas
- 08/12 Immaculate Conception

#### BEGINNING OF THE CHRISTMAS AND NEW YEAR'S EVE (RAUHNÄCHTE)

21/12 Night of St Thomas  
astronom. and calend. Start of winter - Winter solstice

- 24/12 Christmas Eve
- 25/12 Christmas Day
- 26/12 St Stephen's Day
- 27/12 St John's Day
- 28/12 Day of the innocent children
- 29/12 St David's Day
- 30/12 Farmer's New Year
- 31/12 New Year's Eve



**'In the old knowledge lies no yesterday, but a tomorrow with roots'**

## APRIL

'EASTER MONTH'

*If St George's Day is warm and bright, rough weather may still be in sight.*

### FOLK WEATHER DAYS & FESTIVE HOLIDAYS

23/04 St George's Day  
*According to old folk belief, the awakening of spring also marks the time when the Doser Waterfall begins to flow again.*

30/04 Walpurgis Night  
*A traditional 'Rauhnacht' (mystical night steeped in Alpine folklore)*

## MAY

'MONTH OF JOY'

*Pankrätius, Servatius and Bonifatius – three frosty fellows, and cold Sophie never misses her cue at the end.*

### FOLK WEATHER DAYS & FESTIVE HOLIDAYS

- 01/05 National Holiday (Austria)
- Second Sunday in May** Mother's Day

#### THE ICE SAINTS

- 11/05 Mamertus
- 12/05 Pankrätius
- 13/05 Servatius
- 14/05 Bonifatius
- 15/05 Cold Sophie

## JUNE

'FALLOW MONTH'

*Before St John's Day, pray for rain – afterwards, it comes in vain.*

### FOLK WEATHER DAYS & FESTIVE HOLIDAYS

- Second Sunday in June** Father's Day
- 11–20 June 'Schafskälte' (Cold Spell of the Sheep)
- 24/06 Astronomical and calendar start of summer (Summer Solstice)

**Third Sunday after Pentecost**  
'Herz-Jesu-Feuer' (Sacred Heart Fires)  
*During this time, the Sacred Heart Fires are lit once again across the Lechtal mountains – glowing signs of faith, unity, and tradition, high up on the peaks.*

- 24/06 St John's Day

- 27/06 Seven Sleepers' Day

29/06 St Peter and Paul  
*Traditional beginning of the alpine summer – the start of seasonal cattle drives to the mountain pastures ('Almauftrieb')*



**Shrove Tuesday & Easter**

Easter comes when the first full moon of spring in the calendar - between 22 March and 25 April.

Carnival dances ahead of the moon: Always 46 days before, on Shrove Tuesday, is the end of the fun and Lent follows. Because everything has its time: the exuberance, the pause - and the new beginning.



**Ascension Day, Whitsun and Corpus Christi**

are among the most important holidays in the church year - and all are based on the date of Easter. Ascension Day is celebrated 40 days after Easter, Pentecost follows 10 days later. A further 10 days after that Corpus Christi is celebrated - in many places with solemn processions and living tradition.