



Wörthersee Circular Trail

THE COMPLETE GUIDE



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Contents

- 01** Overview
- 02** Key Data
- 03** Introduction
- 04** Stage-by-Stage Guide
- 05** Recommended Itinerary
- 06** Planning the Route
- 07** Towns, Villages and Overnight Stops
- 08** Getting to the Start
- 09** Getting Home from the Finish
- 10** Which Direction Should You Walk?
- 11** Accommodation Along the Route
- 12** Camping and Wild Camping
- 13** Food, Water and Resupply
- 14** Navigation and Waymarking
- 15** Terrain, Conditions and Difficulty in Practice
- 16** Weather and Best Time to Walk
- 17** Safety Notes
- 18** Gear Recommendations
- 19** Budget and Costs
- 20** Luggage Transfer, Guided Tours and Support Services
- 21** Shorter Hikes and Best Sections
- 22** Highlights and Points of Interest
- 23** Common Mistakes and Planning Tips
- 24** Final Advice

Overview

Wörthersee Circular Trail: A Carinthian Lake Loop

The Wörthersee Circular Trail is a 58.8 km waymarked loop around Lake Wörthersee in Carinthia, southern [Austria](#). Usually walked in 3–4 days, it is a moderate, town-based trail with about 1,500 m of ascent and a highest point around 850 m. It suits hikers who want forest paths, lake views, swimming stops and easy logistics rather than remote mountain terrain. Accommodation is in lakeside resorts such as Velden, Pörschach, Klagenfurt, Reifnitz and Maria Wörth.

Route Overview

The official Wörthersee Rundwanderweg is a circular trail with no fixed start, though Velden am Wörthersee is the usual start and finish. The signed stage sequence runs broadly anticlockwise: Velden to Reifnitz along the south shore, Reifnitz to Klagenfurt at the eastern end, Klagenfurt to Pörschach on the north shore, then Pörschach back to Velden. Because trains run on the north shore, buses serve the south shore and Wörthersee boats link stage towns from late April to October, single-stage walks are easy. For a longer Austrian crossing compare the [Alpe-Adria Trail](#); for a tougher Carinthian ridge route see the [Carnic High Trail](#), or try another lake loop on the [Attersee Circular Trail](#).

Wörthersee history and the lakeside resort era

Lake Wörthersee was recorded as “Werdse” in a 1143 deed, with its name linked to the islands and peninsula around Maria Wörth. Christian settlement on the Maria Wörth peninsula dates back to roughly the 9th century. The lake became a fashionable summer retreat after the Südbahn reached Klagenfurt in 1863 and later extended along the north shore towards Villach, drawing Vienna’s nobility and wealthy bourgeoisie. Today’s Rundwanderweg links older paths, forest tracks and lakeside promenades into one signed circuit.

Notable highlights

- **Pyramidenkogel observation tower:** On the 851 m Pyramidenkogel south of the lake, this timber-and-steel observation tower gives 360-degree views over Wörthersee and the Karawanken. It is reached by a short climb or detour from the south-shore route.
- **Maria Wörth church peninsula:** A narrow wooded peninsula topped by two medieval churches, where the first St Mary’s church dates to around 875 AD. The Romanesque collegiate church and the smaller winter church below it make this the most recognisable cultural stop on the loop.
- **Velden am Wörthersee:** The west-end resort is known for Schloss Velden, now a luxury hotel, and its casino. It is the most common place to start and finish the circular walk.
- **Klagenfurt am Wörthersee:** Carinthia’s capital sits at the eastern end of the lake, with the Lindwurm fountain on Neuer Platz and the Lend Canal linking the old town to the lake. It is also a major transport hub on the route.
- **Beech and conifer forest sections:** Much of the trail runs through shaded woodland on slopes above the shore. These sections provide relief from summer heat and repeated framed views down to the water.

- **Turquoise lake and shore towns:** The route threads bathing resorts including Pörschach, Krumpendorf and Reifnitz, with promenades, lidos and reed-fringed bays. In summer, Wörthersee is warm enough for swimming stops.

Challenges to expect

This is not a high-alpine trek, but the 58.8 km distance and 1,500 m total ascent still add up over 3–4 days. Expect steady climbs and descents through forest, mixed surfaces, and some paved promenade or minor-road sections near the lake. Summer shore sections can be hot, while woodland can be muddy after rain. Navigation is helped by waymarking and frequent towns, with trains, buses and boats providing bailout options.

Key Data

Country	Austria
Distance	58.8 km
Duration	3-4 days
Difficulty	Moderate
Trail type	Loop
Elevation gain/loss	1500 m
Highest point	850 m
Terrain & landscape	Lakeland, Hilly, Forest
Trail surface	Forest Tracks, Dirt Paths, Gravel, Paved
Accommodation	Hotels, Guesthouses, Lodges, Campsites, Hostels
Average daytime temp.	20°C
Chance of rainfall	Medium
Estimated cost	\$\$
Optimal season	Spring, Summer, Autumn
Accessibility	Family Friendly, Pet Friendly
Facilities	Restrooms, Water Sources, Campsites, Picnic Areas
Permits & fees	No permits or fees

Introduction

The Wörthersee Rundwanderweg is a gentle but rewarding circuit of Carinthia's largest lake, linking Velden, Maria Wörth, Reifnitz, Klagenfurt, Krumpendorf and Pörtschach on a waymarked blue-white-blue walking route. It suits hikers who want a first multi-day trail with lake views, forest shade, swimming stops and unusually simple public-transport back-up.

The character changes often: beech and conifer woodland above the shore, gravel and dirt paths through the hills, then promenades and resort streets near the water. The south side brings the climb towards the Pyramidenkogel and the churches of Maria Wörth; the north side is more town-linked, with easy access to trains and lakeside services.

This is not a remote alpine trek, and that is part of its appeal. Beds, food, boats, buses and railway stations sit close to the route, so the loop can be walked as a four-day holiday, compressed by fit walkers, or broken into single stages.

It still asks for proper pacing. Around 1,500 m of cumulative ascent, hot paved sections in summer and muddy woodland after rain make it more than a flat lakeside stroll, especially with a pack.

This guide covers the stages, daily planning, accommodation, food, transport, terrain and common mistakes.

Stage-by-Stage Guide

The signed four-stage itinerary runs anticlockwise from Velden am Wörthersee to Reifnitz, Klagenfurt am Wörthersee, Pörschach am Wörthersee and back to Velden. It can also be walked in the opposite direction or split into single day walks, as the north shore has rail access and the south shore is served by buses and seasonal Wörthersee boats.

Distances are approximate. Follow the blue-white-blue hiking markings for the walking route rather than the separate lakeside cycle path or the shore road.

Stage 1: Velden am Wörthersee to Reifnitz — approx. 18 km

This is the most substantial stage of the loop and the one with the biggest height gain. From the usual start at the Schiffsanlegestelle in Velden, opposite Schloss Velden, the route leaves the busy west-end resort and works into the wooded south-shore hills.

The walking is a mix of forest paths, dirt tracks, gravel and short paved sections near settlements. Expect more shade than on the open lakeside promenades, but woodland can be muddy after rain and the climb towards the high ground above Maria Wörth makes this feel like a proper hiking day.

Key landmarks on this stage include Trattnigteich, a quiet pond in the south-shore forest, the Pyramidenkogel above Maria Wörth, St. Anna Church above Reifnitz, and Maria Wörth itself. Maria Wörth is one of the cultural highlights of the trail, with its wooded peninsula and medieval churches overlooking the lake.

The Pyramidenkogel is the celebrated high point of the Wörthersee Rundwanderweg. The summit area reaches 851 m and is crowned by the 100 m timber-and-steel observation tower, with wide views over Wörthersee, the Karawanken, the Julian Alps and the Nockberge. Some GPX versions treat the tower as a short signed spur rather than the through-line of the route; walkers who skip it stay lower, but also miss the best panorama of the circuit.

Food, cafés and water are easiest to plan around Velden, Maria Wörth and Reifnitz. Do not rely on finding frequent services through the forested hill sections, especially outside the main summer season; carry enough water for the climb and for hot weather.

Reifnitz has accommodation in and around the resort, with further options nearby at Maria Wörth. In peak summer, beds around the lake can book up, so this stage end should be reserved ahead rather than treated as a walk-in stop.

Public transport is useful here because the south shore is served by buses, and the Wörthersee boat service links lakeside landing stages from late April to October. Boat operating dates, current timetables and any Wörthersee PlusCard boat discount should be checked before travelling.

Navigation is generally straightforward on the waymarked route, but pay attention where local paths, minor roads and possible Pyramidenkogel variants meet. In warm weather, start early: the climb is not technical, but paved and exposed sections near the lake can become very hot.

Stage 2: Reifnitz to Klagenfurt am Wörthersee — approx. 11 km

This is the shortest of the four standard stages and makes a gentler day after the Pyramidenkogel stage. It continues around the eastern side of Wörthersee towards Klagenfurt am Wörthersee, Carinthia's capital and the main transport hub on the route.

The terrain is easier than Stage 1, with a practical mix of lakeside walking, paths, gravel, promenade-style sections and minor-road or paved stretches near the developed east end of the lake. It is not remote walking; the day is more about linking the south shore to Klagenfurt than gaining height.

The main highlight is the approach into Klagenfurt's lakeside area, with the option to continue into the city for the Lendkanal and the old-town sights around Neuer Platz and the Lindwurm fountain. The trail itself remains a hiking route, but the setting becomes increasingly urban as it reaches the east end of the lake.

Food and water are straightforward at both ends of the stage, with Reifnitz at the start and Klagenfurt at the finish. Carry water between them, particularly in summer, as this stage can include warm paved sections and there is no need to make the short distance uncomfortable.

Klagenfurt has the widest range of accommodation on the circuit, from hotels and guesthouses to hostels and other town-based options. It is also the easiest place to insert a rest night, shorten the route, or join the trail if starting away from Velden.

Transport access is excellent. Klagenfurt am Wörthersee is the main rail and bus hub for the lake area, lies on the line between Villach and Vienna, and also has Klagenfurt Airport. Seasonal boats can also be useful for adjusting the day, but timetables should be checked before travelling.

Navigation is usually simple, but take care not to drift onto the lakeside cycle route unless the walking signs direct you there. The main practical warning is heat: this stage is low-level and can feel exposed on paved lakeside approaches in high summer.

Stage 3: Klagenfurt am Wörthersee to Pörtschach am Wörthersee — approx. 19 km

This is the longest standard stage and follows the north shore from Klagenfurt towards Pörtschach, passing Krumpendorf am Wörthersee along the way. It is a good stage for walkers who like regular services and transport options, but the distance still deserves an early start.

Expect varied surfaces: promenades and paved resort sections near the lake, minor-road stretches, gravel, forest tracks and woodland paths on the slopes above the shore. The route is not alpine or exposed, but the repeated small ups and downs contribute to the trail's overall ascent.

Krumpendorf is the key intermediate resort and a logical place to pause, swim or shorten the day if needed. The north-shore hills also give framed views back across the turquoise lake, with wooded viewpoints such as Zillhöhe, Hohe Gloriette and Pirker Kogel associated with this side of the circuit.

Food and water are available at Klagenfurt, Krumpendorf and Pörtschach, but carry enough between resort stops. In July and August, the open lake and promenade sections can be hot, while shaded forest sections may stay damp or muddy after rain.

Pörtschach is a major north-shore bathing resort with plentiful accommodation, including hotels, guesthouses and lakeside holiday options. As with Velden and Klagenfurt, summer is peak season, so book ahead if the stage falls during holiday periods.

This is the easiest stage to manage by rail. The Südbahn runs along the north shore, with stations at Klagenfurt, Krumpendorf and Pörtschach, making it simple to shorten the day, skip a section, or return to accommodation elsewhere on the lake. Seasonal boats provide another option when operating.

Waymarking is frequent, but the north shore has many local paths, promenades and developed lakeside areas. Keep following the blue-white-blue hiking marks, especially where the walking route diverges from the cycle path or road-side alternatives.

Stage 4: Pörtschach am Wörthersee to Velden am Wörthersee — approx. 13 km

The final stage closes the loop through the north-western side of Wörthersee and returns to Velden. It is shorter than the previous day, but still includes woodland and hilly ground rather than a flat shore walk.

The route leaves Pörtschach and uses a mix of forest paths, tracks, gravel and paved sections near settlements. The small lake of Forstsee is the key landmark of the day and gives this stage a quieter, more inland feel before the trail descends back towards Velden.

Views are typically framed by beech and conifer woodland rather than continuous open lakeside panoramas. The reward comes in the final return to Velden, where the route completes the circuit near the west end of Wörthersee.

Food and water should be planned around Pörtschach and Velden. The forested sections around Forstsee are not a place to rely on regular services, so carry enough water and snacks for the full stage, especially outside the main resort season.

Velden has extensive accommodation and is the most common place to finish the walk, with hotels, guesthouses, hostels, campsites and other resort-based options around the lake area. It is also practical to stay elsewhere on the north shore and use the railway to reposition if accommodation in Velden is full.

Transport access is strong at both ends. Pörtschach and Velden are on the north-shore railway, and Velden also has boat access during the operating season. Boat timetables and seasonal dates should be checked before travelling.

Navigation is generally uncomplicated, but this is a stage where live diversions matter because wooded ravines and local path closures can affect the line. Any current closure or diversion around the Römerschlucht / Roman Gorge should be checked before travelling. After wet weather, expect mud in the forest and take extra care on shaded descents.

Recommended Itinerary

Standard 4-day itinerary

The official stage pattern works well for most walkers: it keeps daily distances moderate, uses the established resort towns for overnight stops, and places the hillier south-shore section at the start if beginning in Velden am Wörthersee. The loop can be walked in either direction, but the sequence below follows the common anticlockwise order: Velden → Reifnitz → Klagenfurt → Pörschach → Velden.

Day	From	To	Approx. distance	Why this stage makes sense	Services/accommodation notes
1	Velden am Wörthersee	Reifnitz	18 km	This is the biggest south-shore day and includes the main climb towards the Pyramidenkogel area, with Trattnigteich, Maria Wörth and the wooded slopes above the lake on the way. It is a satisfying first stage, but allow time for the ascent, summer heat and any visit to the Pyramidenkogel tower.	Velden has plentiful hotels, guesthouses and transport links at the start. Reifnitz has resort accommodation and south-shore bus access; beds should be booked ahead in peak summer. Check current Pyramidenkogel tower opening hours and fees before planning the day around it.
2	Reifnitz	Klagenfurt am Wörthersee	11 km	A shorter recovery stage after the hillier first day, finishing in Carinthia's capital at the east end of the lake. The moderate distance leaves time for a swim, a slower morning, or time in Klagenfurt around the Lendkanal and old town.	Klagenfurt is the strongest logistics point on the route, with rail, bus and a wide spread of accommodation. It is a good place to pause, replace kit or join/leave the trail.
3	Klagenfurt am Wörthersee	Pörschach am Wörthersee	19 km	This is the longest north-shore day and links Klagenfurt with Krumpendorf and Pörschach. It is less remote than a mountain stage, but the distance and paved/promontory sections can feel tiring in hot weather.	Krumpendorf and Pörschach both have lakeside resort services, bathing facilities and accommodation. The north shore is also served by the Südbahn railway, making this the easiest stage to shorten or bail out from if needed.
4	Pörschach am Wörthersee	Velden am Wörthersee	13 km	A shorter final day returns through the north-western hills, passing the Forstsee area before descending back to Velden. The distance is practical for onward travel from Velden the same afternoon if train times work.	Pörschach and Velden both have rail access and plenty of visitor services. Velden is the usual loop finish, close to the boat dock opposite Schloss Velden.

Slower variant: 5 days or day-hike style

A slower approach suits families, swimmers, hot-weather walkers and anyone who wants more time at Maria Wörth, the Pyramidenkogel, Klagenfurt, Krumpendorf or Pörschach. The easiest way to slow the route is to use the lake's transport network rather than forcing every stage to be an overnight leg.

Public transport makes this unusually flexible for a circular trail. The north shore has railway stations at Velden, Pörschach, Krumpendorf and Klagenfurt; the south shore is served by buses through Maria Wörth and Reifnitz; and the Wörthersee boat service links landing stages from late April to October. Boat operating dates, the Wörthersee PlusCard discount and current timetables should be checked before travelling.

A practical slower plan is to keep the official four stages but add a rest or short-transfer day in Klagenfurt, Pörschach or Velden. Another option is to split the longer Velden–Reifnitz or Klagenfurt–Pörschach days using bus, train or boat connections, then return to the same accommodation base rather than moving luggage every night. Exact split points depend on current timetables and accommodation availability, so check official mapping before booking.

Faster variant: 3 days or a long 2 days

Fit walkers can compress the loop, but the route is still nearly 60 km with about 1,500 m of cumulative ascent. The limiting factors are usually not technical terrain, but the repeated small climbs, the optional ascent to the Pyramidenkogel, asphalt sections near the shore, and heat in midsummer.

A 3-day version suits strong walkers who are comfortable with longer mixed-surface days and who book accommodation in places that match their chosen split. The most obvious approach is to combine parts of the official stages while still using the resort towns and public transport to manage start and finish points. Check official mapping before booking, because exact overnight stops and daily distances will vary with the split chosen.

A 2-day crossing of the loop is only for very fit walkers who want a fast, endurance-style outing rather than a relaxed lake circuit. It is better planned outside the hottest summer periods and with a clear bail-out plan using the railway on the north shore or buses on the south shore. Accommodation and transport timing should be checked carefully before committing to this version.

Planning the Route

How many days to allow

Most walkers should plan the Wörthersee Rundwanderweg over the four signed stages: Velden am Wörthersee to Reifnitz, Reifnitz to Klagenfurt am Wörthersee, Klagenfurt to Pörtlach am Wörthersee, and Pörtlach back to Velden. This gives sensible daily distances, keeps the harder south-shore climbing separate from the longer north-shore stages, and finishes each day in or near a resort with accommodation and transport.

A 3-day itinerary is very workable, but it usually means combining the short Reifnitz–Klagenfurt stage with one of the neighbouring days. That creates one longer day of around 29–30 km, depending on where you stop, so it suits walkers who are comfortable covering distance on mixed forest paths, gravel and asphalt.

A 2-day version is possible for fit walkers, but it changes the character of the route. The trail becomes a fast, hilly lake circuit rather than a relaxed multi-day walk with time for swimming stops, viewpoints and town visits.

Plan	Best for	Notes
4 days	Most walkers, families, first long-distance walk	Follows the signed stage structure and uses natural overnight stops.
3 days	Fit walkers with limited time	Requires one long combined day; book accommodation around the chosen split.
2 days	Strong walkers moving quickly	Logistically easy, but long days reduce time for Pyramidenkogel, Maria Wörth and swimming stops.
Single stages	Day hikers and section walkers	Very practical using the north-shore railway, south-shore buses and seasonal boats.

Choosing a start point and direction

Velden am Wörthersee is the usual start and finish, with the Schiffsanlegestelle / boat dock opposite Schloss Velden a natural meeting point. The loop is not dependent on Velden, though: it can be joined at any lakeside boat dock or railway station, and it can be walked in either direction.

The official stage order runs broadly anticlockwise: Velden → Reifnitz → Klagenfurt → Pörtlach → Velden. This is the simplest structure to follow because the named stage towns match the promoted route and the main accommodation stops.

Starting elsewhere can make sense if arriving by rail into Klagenfurt, Pörtlach, Krumpendorf or Velden, or if accommodation availability is better in another resort. On a circular route, the main planning point is not the start itself but where the overnight stops fall.

Overnight stops and accommodation planning

Accommodation is one of the easier parts of this walk. Hotels, guesthouses, pensions, hostels and campsites are concentrated in Velden, Reifnitz, Klagenfurt, Krumpendorf, Pörschach and Maria Wörth, so the route is not tied to remote huts or fixed mountain accommodation.

Summer is the main exception. Wörthersee is a major lakeside holiday area, and popular resort towns should be booked ahead in peak season, especially if walking at weekends or during school holidays.

The four-stage itinerary has the cleanest overnight pattern:

Night	Usual overnight area	Why it works
Before / after the walk	Velden am Wörthersee	Usual start and finish, with rail and boat access.
Day 1	Reifnitz	Natural south-shore stage end after the Pyramidenkogel / Maria Wörth section.
Day 2	Klagenfurt am Wörthersee	Main transport hub at the east end of the lake.
Day 3	Pörschach am Wörthersee	Good north-shore resort stop before the final return to Velden.

If accommodation is unavailable in the exact stage town, use the transport network rather than forcing an awkward walking day. The north shore is particularly flexible because the railway serves Velden, Pörschach, Krumpendorf and Klagenfurt; the south shore is served by buses, with boats linking landing stages during the operating season.

Shortening, extending and section hiking

This is one of the easiest Austrian multi-day routes to shorten. Every stage is close to towns, roads, buses, rail stations or boat landings, so bad weather, tired legs or a late start rarely require abandoning the whole trip.

Section hiking is especially practical. The north-shore stages can be planned around the Südbahn railway stations at Velden, Pörschach, Krumpendorf and Klagenfurt, while the south-shore villages of Maria Wörth and Reifnitz are linked by bus. The Wörthersee boat service also connects the lake resorts from late April to October, but current dates and timetables should be checked before travelling.

To extend the walk, allow more time rather than adding unnecessary distance. A slower schedule gives space for the Pyramidenkogel tower, bathing stops, Maria Wörth, Klagenfurt's old town and lakefront, and the quieter Forstsee section before returning to Velden.

Planning the Pyramidenkogel stage

The Velden–Reifnitz stage needs the most careful day planning. It includes the south-shore forest, Trattngiteich, Maria Wörth and the climb towards the Pyramidenkogel, the celebrated high point of the route.

Some GPX variants treat the Pyramidenkogel summit and tower as a short signed spur rather than the compulsory through-line. Walkers who skip the tower stay lower, while those who include it should allow extra time for the climb, viewpoint stop and descent towards the lake.

The Pyramidenkogel observation tower has separate opening arrangements and fees. These should be checked before travelling, especially outside the main summer season.

Food and water

This is a town-based trail, not a remote carry-everything route. Velden, Reifnitz, Klagenfurt, Krumpendorf and Pörschach are all resort settlements where meals, cafés, shops or accommodation catering are generally part of the planning picture.

Even so, each walking day should start with enough water and snacks to cover the forest and hillside sections between towns. This matters most on the south-shore stage over the Pyramidenkogel area and on hot summer days, when paved shore sections and open promenades can feel much warmer than the shaded beech and conifer woods.

Specific shop opening times, restaurant rest days and campsite facilities change seasonally. This should be checked before travelling.

Navigation and route finding

The Wörthersee Rundwanderweg is waymarked with blue-white-blue markings and is a dedicated walking route, separate from the lakeside cycle path and shore road. Navigation is generally straightforward because the lake, resort towns and transport stops provide frequent reference points.

A map or downloaded GPX is still worthwhile. The route alternates between forest paths, tracks, gravel, promenades and minor-road sections, and it is easy to drift onto more obvious lakeside infrastructure if walking on autopilot near the resorts.

Check for live diversions before setting out. The Römerschlucht / Roman Gorge has been noted as closed, so current route information should be checked before relying on that section.

Transport planning

Transport is a major advantage of this route and should be built into the plan rather than treated as a backup only. The north shore has rail stations at Velden, Pörschach, Krumpendorf and Klagenfurt, while the south shore is served by public buses through places such as Maria Wörth and Reifnitz.

Klagenfurt am Wörthersee is the main public transport hub, with rail and bus connections and its own airport. This makes it a practical arrival point even if the walking itinerary itself starts in Velden.

The Wörthersee boat service is useful for joining stages, returning to a base town or turning a walking day into a walk-and-boat outing. It normally operates from late April to October, and the free Wörthersee PlusCard gives a 50% discount on boat tickets; current operating dates, fares and discount conditions should be checked before booking around it.

Weather and seasonal planning

The route is hikeable for much of the year thanks to the mild southern Carinthian climate, with the main walking season running from spring through autumn. Summer brings the warmest lake water and the best swimming opportunities, but also the hottest walking conditions and the busiest accommodation period.

In high summer, start early on longer stages and carry more water than the distance alone suggests. Open lakeside and asphalt sections can become tiring in heat, while the forest sections offer shade but may be muddy after rain.

Spring and autumn are often better for walkers who prefer quieter resorts and cooler conditions. Outside the main holiday months, check accommodation opening dates, boat schedules and Pyramidenkogel tower access before finalising the itinerary.

Towns, Villages and Overnight Stops

The Wörthersee Rundwanderweg is unusually easy to split because every official stage finishes in or near a lakeside resort. Accommodation is concentrated around Velden, Reifnitz, Klagenfurt, Pörtschach, Krumpendorf and Maria Wörth, with a mix of hotels, Gasthöfe/Pensionen, lodges, hostels and campsites.

Summer is peak season on Wörthersee, especially in the bathing resorts, so beds should be booked ahead for July, August, weekends and public holidays. Outside the main season, accommodation is still generally available in the larger towns, but smaller places and campsites may be more seasonal; this should be checked before travelling.

Place	Best use for hikers	Transport notes
Velden am Wörthersee	Usual start/finish; excellent overnight base	North-shore railway station; boat dock
Maria Wörth	Scenic south-shore stop; possible quiet overnight	South-shore buses; boat access in season
Reifnitz	Official Stage 1 overnight	South-shore buses; boat access in season
Klagenfurt am Wörthersee	Main transport hub; strong resupply and overnight option	Rail, bus and airport access; boat access in season
Krumpendorf am Wörthersee	Useful north-shore stop or shorter-stage base	North-shore railway station; boat access in season
Pörtschach am Wörthersee	Official Stage 3 overnight	North-shore railway station; boat access in season

Velden am Wörthersee

Velden sits at the west end of Wörthersee and is the usual start and finish of the circular trail. The common starting point is the Schiffsanlegestelle / boat dock opposite Schloss Velden, but the loop can also be joined from the railway station or from other points around the lake.

It is one of the strongest overnight bases on the route, with plentiful resort accommodation and food options. It works well for a first night before starting the south-shore stage to Reifnitz, or as a final-night stop after completing the loop from Pörtschach via Forstsee.

Velden is on the north-shore Südbahn railway, making it straightforward for arrivals by train. The Wörthersee boat service also links Velden with other lakeside landing stages from late April to October; operating dates and timetables should be checked before travelling.

For hikers, Velden is the best place to get organised before committing to the first, hillier stage. The Velden–Reifnitz stage includes the south-shore forest, Trattnigteich, Maria Wörth and the climb towards the Pyramidenkogel, so starting with food, water and a clear weather plan is sensible.

Trattnigteich

Trattnigteich is a small pond in the south-shore forest above Velden, reached early on the Velden–Reifnitz stage. It is a scenic rest point rather than a village or overnight stop.

Do not plan on Trattnigteich for accommodation, shops or reliable food. Treat it as a short pause on the day's walk between resort services.

Pyramidenkogel

The Pyramidenkogel is the high wooded hill above Maria Wörth and Reifnitz, reaching 851 m. It is the highest point associated with the Wörthersee Rundwanderweg, although some GPX variants keep slightly lower and treat the summit and observation tower as a short signed spur.

This is not an overnight stop in the normal stage plan. Its main value for hikers is the 100 m timber-and-steel observation tower and the broad views over Wörthersee, the Karawanken, the Julian Alps and the Nockberge.

Opening hours and any tower fees should be checked before relying on a visit. In hot weather, this climb can make the Velden–Reifnitz stage feel much more substantial than the lake setting suggests.

Maria Wörth

Maria Wörth lies on the south shore, on a narrow wooded peninsula between Velden and Reifnitz. It is one of the most memorable stops on the loop, with its two medieval churches above the water.

It can be used as a quieter overnight halt if accommodation is available, but most official itineraries continue to Reifnitz for the first night. It is better treated as a cultural and rest stop on the Velden–Reifnitz stage unless an intentionally short first day is being planned.

Maria Wörth is served by south-shore buses, and the Wörthersee boat service calls at lakeside landing stages in season. Current bus and boat timings should be checked before using it to shorten or interrupt a stage.

Food and refreshment options are more limited than in the larger resorts, so do not rely on Maria Wörth as the main resupply point for the day without checking opening times. In summer, it is a good place to pause near the lake before continuing towards Reifnitz.

Reifnitz

Reifnitz is the official end of Stage 1 from Velden and the start of Stage 2 to Klagenfurt. It sits on the south shore, making it the natural overnight stop after the longest and hilliest opening day.

Accommodation is available in the resort area, including the general mix of hotels, guesthouses and other lakeside lodging found around Wörthersee. Booking ahead is sensible in summer because this side of the lake is popular and the number of practical stage-end options is smaller than in Klagenfurt or Velden.

Reifnitz is served by south-shore buses and by the seasonal Wörthersee boat service. This makes it a useful place to stop, restart or bail out if the Pyramidenkogel stage takes longer than expected.

For food, cafés and evening meals, plan around normal resort services rather than expecting the density of a city. If arriving late, check accommodation meal arrangements or nearby opening times in advance.

Klagenfurt am Wörthersee

Klagenfurt sits at the east end of Wörthersee and is the official end of Stage 2 from Reifnitz. It is the main transport and service hub on the trail, and the most practical place for hikers who need flexible accommodation, onward travel, rest-day options or resupply.

The city has the broadest choice of services on the loop. It is a good overnight stop for anyone walking the standard four-stage itinerary, and it also works well as a base for day-hiking individual stages using train, bus or boat.

Klagenfurt is on the railway line between Villach and Vienna and has major rail and bus connections. Klagenfurt Airport also gives it the best access for hikers arriving from farther away.

The route links the lake with the city via the east end of Wörthersee, and the Lendkanal connects the old town to the water. Hikers who want an easier logistical night should favour Klagenfurt over smaller south-shore stops.

Krumpendorf am Wörthersee

Krumpendorf is on the north shore between Klagenfurt and Pörtschach. The official Stage 3 continues past it to Pörtschach, but Krumpendorf is a useful intermediate stop if the Klagenfurt–Pörtschach day needs shortening.

Accommodation and resort services are available here, including lakeside lodging and bathing infrastructure typical of the north-shore towns. It is a sensible option for a more relaxed itinerary, family pacing or a late start from Klagenfurt.

Krumpendorf has a railway station on the north-shore Südbahn, which makes it particularly useful for section-hikers. It is also linked by the seasonal Wörthersee boat service.

Because the official stage to Pörtschach is one of the longer days, Krumpendorf gives walkers an easy escape valve without leaving the lake corridor. It is also a practical place to rejoin the trail after using public transport.

Pörtschach am Wörthersee

Pörtschach is the official end of Stage 3 from Klagenfurt and the start of the final stage back to Velden. It is one of the main north-shore resorts and a strong overnight base, especially before the Pörtschach–Velden stage via the north-western hills and Forstsee.

Accommodation is plentiful by trail standards, with the usual Wörthersee mix of hotels, guesthouses and seasonal resort options. Summer bookings should still be made ahead, as Pörtschach is a popular lakeside stay rather than a remote hikers' stop.

Pörtschach has a railway station on the north-shore line and is served by the Wörthersee boat service in season. This makes it easy to use as a start point, finish point or fallback if walking only part of the circular route.

Food, cafés and resort services are generally easier here than at smaller points between stages. For most walkers on the four-day itinerary, Pörtschach is the most convenient final-night stop before closing the loop to Velden.

Forstsee

Forstsee is a small lake in the north-western hills on the final Pörtschach–Velden stage. Like Trattnigteich, it is a scenic feature rather than a practical overnight base.

Do not treat Forstsee as a resupply or accommodation stop. It is best planned as a quiet rest point on the way back towards Velden, with main services at Pörtschach before the stage and Velden at the finish.

Choosing where to stay

For the standard four-stage itinerary, the most natural overnight sequence is Velden, Reifnitz, Klagenfurt and Pörtschach, finishing back in Velden. This matches the signed stage structure and keeps each day close to the official distances.

For easier pacing, add a night at Maria Wörth or Krumpendorf if accommodation and transport timings work. Krumpendorf is especially useful because it has a north-shore railway station.

For the simplest logistics, base yourself in one of the rail-served north-shore towns — Velden, Klagenfurt, Krumpendorf or Pörtschach — and walk individual stages using train, bus and boat connections. The south shore relies more on buses and seasonal boats, so timetables matter more there.

The free Wörthersee PlusCard gives a 50% discount on boat tickets, but current validity and boat operating dates should be checked before booking an itinerary around it.

Getting to the Start

The Wörthersee Rundwanderweg is a circular trail, so Velden am Wörthersee is the usual start rather than a compulsory one. Most walkers begin at the Schiffsanlegestelle / boat dock in Velden, opposite Schlosshotel Velden, then follow the official anticlockwise stage order towards Reifnitz, Klagenfurt, Pörschach and back to Velden.

Because the loop is built around lake resorts, it can also be joined at any convenient railway station or boat landing around Wörthersee. This is useful if accommodation availability, train times or weather make Klagenfurt, Pörschach or Krumpendorf a more practical first night.

By train

Train is the easiest way to reach the trail. The Südbahn / south railway runs along the north shore of Wörthersee, with stations at Velden am Wörthersee, Pörschach am Wörthersee, Krumpendorf am Wörthersee and Klagenfurt am Wörthersee.

For the standard start, travel to Velden am Wörthersee station and make your way to the lakeside boat dock at Velden. Allow time for the short local transfer between the station, your accommodation and the Schiffsanlegestelle, especially if arriving with luggage or starting immediately.

Klagenfurt am Wörthersee is the main rail and bus hub for the lake and lies on the line between Villach and Vienna. If train times to Velden are awkward, it is perfectly practical to start the loop in Klagenfurt instead, as the route is circular and the official second stage reaches the city.

Timetables and platform details should be checked before travelling, particularly for early starts, late arrivals and travel outside the main summer season.

By bus

Public buses serve the south shore settlements, including Maria Wörth and Reifnitz. This matters because the first official stage from Velden to Reifnitz finishes on the south side of the lake, away from the north-shore railway.

Buses are also useful for section-hiking: you can walk one stage and return by public transport rather than committing to the full loop. For example, Reifnitz and Maria Wörth are logical access points if you want to join or leave the south-shore section near the Pyramidenkogel.

Current bus timetables, weekend services and evening return options should be checked before travelling. If arriving late or walking outside the bus operating window, a local taxi may be the simplest fallback, especially on the south shore.

By car

Driving to Velden is straightforward for walkers who want to start and finish at the same point. As the trail is a loop, there is no end-to-end vehicle transfer to arrange if you leave the car near your first night's accommodation and return to Velden on foot.

Do not assume that short-stay lakeside parking is suitable for a multi-day hike. Long-stay parking, hotel parking permission and any local parking restrictions in Velden or other resort towns should be checked before travelling.

If starting somewhere other than Velden, the same logic applies: choose a base with rail, bus or boat access, and make sure the car can legally remain there for the full walk. Summer is peak season around Wörthersee, so parking and accommodation logistics are best settled before arrival.

From the nearest airport

Klagenfurt Airport is the nearest airport named for this route. Klagenfurt am Wörthersee is also the main transport hub at the east end of the lake, so it is the most practical air gateway for walkers flying in.

From Klagenfurt, continue by train along the north shore to Velden, Pörschach or Krumpendorf, or start the loop directly from Klagenfurt if that fits your itinerary. Connections from the airport into the city and onward train or bus times should be checked before travelling.

Where to stay before starting

Velden am Wörthersee is the most convenient pre-hike base for the classic start at the boat dock opposite Schlosshotel Velden. It has the advantage of being both a railway stop and the usual start/finish point, so logistics are simple on the first morning and after completing the loop.

Klagenfurt am Wörthersee is the best alternative if arriving by long-distance rail, bus or air. It gives the most transport flexibility and works especially well if you are happy to begin the circular trail at the east end of the lake rather than in Velden.

Pörschach am Wörthersee and Krumpendorf am Wörthersee are also practical north-shore bases because they sit on the railway and on the route. Reifnitz and Maria Wörth suit walkers focusing on the south-shore stages, but they rely more on bus and seasonal boat links.

Accommodation is plentiful around Wörthersee, with hotels, guesthouses, hostels and campsites in the main lakeside resorts. Summer is the busiest period, so book ahead if starting in Velden, Pörschach, Krumpendorf, Klagenfurt, Reifnitz or Maria Wörth during peak holiday weeks.

The Wörthersee boat service links stage towns and landing stages from late April to October, and the Wörthersee PlusCard gives a 50% discount on boat tickets. Operating dates, ticket rules and the discount should be checked before travelling if the boat is part of your start-day or fallback plan.

Getting Home from the Finish

Because the Wörthersee Rundwanderweg is a loop, the simplest finish is back in **Velden am Wörthersee**, where the trail commonly starts at the **Schiffsanlegestelle / boat dock opposite Schlosshotel Velden**. The key advantage is that Velden has both lake transport and a railway station, so there is no remote trailhead transfer at the end.

The loop can also be finished or interrupted at other lakeside towns. For onward travel, the north-shore resorts are generally the easiest because the **Südbahn / south railway** serves **Velden, Pörtschach, Krumpendorf and Klagenfurt**.

By train

Velden am Wörthersee has a railway station on the north-shore line, making train the best default option when finishing the full loop in Velden. Trains run on the line between **Villach and Vienna**, with **Klagenfurt am Wörthersee** acting as the main regional rail and bus hub.

If finishing at **Pörtschach am Wörthersee, Krumpendorf am Wörthersee** or **Klagenfurt am Wörthersee**, you can also leave directly by train from those towns. This makes the trail very easy to shorten into individual stages without needing to return to Velden first.

Train times, last departures and any changes around weekends or holidays should be checked before travelling, especially if planning to finish late in the day.

By bus

Public buses serve the south shore, including **Maria Wörth** and **Reifnitz**, where there is no railway station on the lake's north-shore rail line. If ending a stage on the south side, buses are the practical public-transport link towards **Klagenfurt** or other onward connections.

For a late finish on the south shore, do not assume an onward bus will still be convenient. Check the current timetable before committing to a long final day, and consider staying locally in **Reifnitz** or **Maria Wörth** if the timing is tight.

From late April to October, the **Wörthersee boat service** can also be useful for repositioning between lakeside landing stages, including Velden and the other stage towns. Operating dates, daily timetables and the Wörthersee PlusCard boat discount should be checked before relying on the boat as an exit plan.

By car/taxi

If you started and parked in **Velden**, finishing the loop there keeps the car logistics simple: the route returns to the same resort. Parking rules, availability and any charges in Velden should be checked locally before leaving a vehicle for several days.

Taxis are most useful for short transfers from a south-shore finish such as **Reifnitz** or **Maria Wörth** to a north-shore railway station, or back to accommodation if the final stage runs later than planned. In peak summer, pre-booking a taxi is sensible rather than depending on immediate availability at smaller lakeside stops.

From the nearest airport

The nearest relevant airport is **Klagenfurt Airport**. For most hikers, the practical route home is to reach **Klagenfurt am Wörthersee** first by train, bus or taxi, then continue to the airport from there.

Flight schedules, airport transfers and public-transport connections should be checked before travelling. If an early flight is booked, staying in **Klagenfurt** the night before is usually more robust than trying to connect from a smaller lakeside resort on the same morning.

Where to stay at the finish

Velden am Wörthersee has plentiful accommodation, including hotels, guesthouses, hostels and campsites, and is the most convenient overnight stop after completing the full loop. It is also the best place to stay if you want an unhurried finish rather than rushing for the last train, bus or boat.

If onward transport is the priority, **Klagenfurt am Wörthersee** is often the more practical final night because it is the main rail and bus hub and has the airport nearby. In high summer, accommodation around the lake is in peak demand, so Velden, Pörtschach, Krumpendorf, Reifnitz and Klagenfurt should be booked ahead rather than left to arrival day.

Which Direction Should You Walk?

The Wörthersee Rundwanderweg can be walked in either direction and joined at any lakeside boat dock or railway station. For most walkers, however, the best choice is the official anticlockwise sequence:

Velden am Wörthersee → Reifnitz → Klagenfurt am Wörthersee → Pörschach am Wörthersee → Velden.

Standard direction: anticlockwise from Velden

This is the natural direction if following the four signed day-stages. It starts at the usual trailhead by the Schiffsanlegestelle in Velden, then takes the south-shore hills first before returning along the north side of the lake.

The main advantage is clarity. Stage descriptions, accommodation planning and the common town sequence all fit neatly around Velden, Reifnitz, Klagenfurt and Pörschach, so it is the simplest direction for a first completion of the loop.

It also gives a strong scenic progression. The walk begins with the more wooded south side, including Trattnigteich, Maria Wörth and the Pyramidenkogel area, then opens out through Klagenfurt and the north-shore resorts of Krumpendorf and Pörschach before closing the loop via Forstsee back to Velden.

The trade-off is that the toughest climbing comes early. The Velden–Reifnitz stage includes the south-side high ground around the Pyramidenkogel, so anyone starting with a full pack should not treat day one as a gentle warm-up.

Reverse direction: clockwise from Velden

Walking clockwise from Velden sends you first towards Pörschach, then Klagenfurt, Reifnitz and back over the south side towards Velden. This can work well if accommodation availability is better in that order, or if you want to delay the Pyramidenkogel section until later in the trip.

The reverse direction does not give a major transport advantage. The north shore has the Südbahn railway at Velden, Pörschach, Krumpendorf and Klagenfurt, while the south shore is served by buses and, in season, the Wörthersee boat service. That means both directions are easy to shorten, split or abandon if needed.

The main difference is psychological rather than practical. Clockwise walkers finish with the south-shore hills and the Maria Wörth / Pyramidenkogel side of the lake, which can make the final day feel more dramatic. The downside is that the hardest terrain comes late, when legs may be tired.

Climbs, weather and logistics

There is no meaningful ascent saving in either direction: the loop still totals roughly 1,500 m of climbing. The Pyramidenkogel climb, or the signed spur to the tower depending on the variant followed, remains the key effort whichever way the route is walked.

Weather is not usually a direction-decider on this trail. Heat matters more than wind: in high summer, paved shore sections and open resort promenades can feel hot, while the beech and mixed forest

sections give useful shade. Start early on warm days, especially for the longer Velden–Reifnitz and Klagenfurt–Pörschach stages.

Accommodation works in both directions because every stage ends in or near a resort town. In peak summer, book Velden, Reifnitz, Klagenfurt, Pörschach and other lakeside bases ahead rather than choosing direction purely on preference.

Recommendation

Walk the Wörthersee Rundwanderweg **anticlockwise from Velden** unless there is a specific accommodation or transport reason to do otherwise. It follows the official stage order, gives the cleanest planning structure, reaches the major south-shore highlights early, and finishes neatly back at Velden after the north-western Forstsee section.

Accommodation Along the Route

The Wörthersee Rundwanderweg is well suited to inn-to-inn walking. Unlike remote Alpine routes, each official stage finishes in or near a lakeside resort, so most walkers can plan the loop around hotels, guesthouses (Gasthöfe and Pensionen), lodges, hostels or campsites rather than huts.

The strongest accommodation bases are Velden am Wörthersee, Klagenfurt am Wörthersee, Pörschach am Wörthersee and Krumpendorf am Wörthersee. Reifnitz and Maria Wörth also have accommodation, but they are smaller south-shore resorts, so choice can be tighter, especially in summer.

Best overnight stops

For the standard four-stage itinerary, the natural overnight stops are:

1. **Velden am Wörthersee** before starting, or after completing the loop
2. **Reifnitz** after the Velden–Reifnitz stage
3. **Klagenfurt am Wörthersee** after the Reifnitz–Klagenfurt stage
4. **Pörschach am Wörthersee** after the Klagenfurt–Pörschach stage
5. **Velden am Wörthersee** at the finish

This works cleanly because the trail is town-based rather than hut-based. There is no need to carry camping equipment unless camping is part of the intended trip style.

Accommodation by place

Place	Accommodation level	Best for	Notes
Velden am Wörthersee	Good	Start/finish nights, rest days, higher-service stays	The usual start and finish is by the boat dock opposite Schloss Velden. A practical choice for a first or final night, with strong resort infrastructure.
Maria Wörth	Limited to moderate	Shorter stages, quieter south-shore overnight	A scenic stop on the south-shore stage near the churches and lake. Choice is smaller than in the bigger resorts, so book ahead in peak season.
Reifnitz	Moderate	Official Stage 1 overnight	The natural stop after the longer Velden–Reifnitz stage. Accommodation exists, but it is less of a major hub than Velden, Klagenfurt or Pörschach.
Klagenfurt am Wörthersee	Good	Easiest logistics, rail/bus connections, flexible itineraries	Carinthia's capital and the main transport hub on the route. Useful if you want the widest range of services or need to restart, pause or shorten the walk.

Place	Accommodation level	Best for	Notes
Krumpendorf am Wörthersee	Good	Alternative north-shore base, shorter walking days	On the north shore between Klagenfurt and Pörschach. Useful for splitting the longer Klagenfurt–Pörschach section or for walkers using the railway.
Pörschach am Wörthersee	Good	Official Stage 3 overnight, lakeside resort stay	A strong overnight stop before the final stage back to Velden, with resort accommodation and north-shore transport links.
Forstsee area	None for planning purposes	Day-stage landmark only	Treat Forstsee as a scenic point on the final stage, not as a main overnight base. Plan to sleep in Pörschach, Velden or another lakeside resort.
Trattnigteich / south-shore forest sections	None for planning purposes	Rest stop only	The forest sections above the shore are not the accommodation focus of the trail. Use the lake resorts for overnight planning.

Booking ahead

Accommodation is generally easy to find around Wörthersee, but summer is peak season. The lake resorts are popular with swimmers and holidaymakers as well as walkers, so advance booking is strongly recommended for July, August, weekends and public-holiday periods.

This matters most in smaller overnight places such as Reifnitz and Maria Wörth, where there are fewer beds than in Klagenfurt, Velden or Pörschach. If walking without reservations, it is safer to keep the itinerary flexible and use the boat, train or bus to reach a larger resort if the planned stop is full.

Using transport to solve awkward overnights

The route is unusually flexible because the north shore has railway stations at Velden, Pörschach, Krumpendorf and Klagenfurt, while the south shore is served by buses through Maria Wörth and Reifnitz. The Wörthersee boat service also links stage towns and landing stages from late April to October; operating dates should be checked before travelling.

This means it is not essential to sleep exactly at each stage end. You can base yourself in one resort, walk a stage, then return by public transport, or move your overnight to a larger town if accommodation is limited at the official stop.

Klagenfurt is the best fallback for logistics because it is the main rail and bus hub. Velden and Pörschach are also practical bases for walkers who prefer resort accommodation and easy rail access.

Luggage transfer and light-pack walking

The Wörthersee Rundwanderweg works well with a light overnight pack because every stage ends in a serviced settlement. If using a packaged walking holiday, check whether luggage transfer is included before booking.

Independent walkers should not assume bag transfer is automatically available between all accommodation. If carrying a full pack is not desirable, the simplest alternative is to sleep in one or two bases and use the train, bus or seasonal boat service to access the stages.

Camping and Wild Camping

Campsites and camping logistics

The Wörthersee Rundwanderweg is one of the easier Austrian multi-day routes to camp because every stage finishes in or near a resort settlement. Campsites are part of the accommodation mix around Wörthersee, with options concentrated around Velden am Wörthersee, Maria Wörth, Reifnitz, Klagenfurt am Wörthersee, Krumpendorf am Wörthersee and Pörtlach am Wörthersee.

Do not assume that a campsite will sit exactly on the waymarked line. The trail often climbs into forest above the shore, while many services are down by the lake or in the resort centres, so allow time and energy for short detours at the end of the day.

Summer is peak season around Wörthersee. Campsite pitches in the main lakeside resorts should be booked ahead, especially in July and August and at weekends. Outside the main summer period, opening dates can be seasonal; this should be checked before travelling.

Stage	Camping practicality
Velden am Wörthersee to Reifnitz	The longest and hilliest stage, with the Pyramidenkogel area and south-shore forest. Plan the overnight carefully in or near Reifnitz, Maria Wörth or nearby lakeside services rather than expecting informal camping in the woods.
Reifnitz to Klagenfurt am Wörthersee	Shorter stage with straightforward resort logistics. Klagenfurt is the main transport hub and a practical place to resupply or switch to indoor accommodation if needed.
Klagenfurt am Wörthersee to Pörtlach am Wörthersee	A longer north-shore day linking resort areas including Krumpendorf and Pörtlach. Campsite or accommodation bookings should be made in advance in high season.
Pörtlach am Wörthersee to Velden am Wörthersee	Final stage through the north-western hills, passing Forstsee before returning to Velden. Do not rely on finding camping in the forested section; plan to finish in Velden or use established accommodation nearby.

Wild camping

Wild camping should not be treated as a normal strategy for this trail. The route circles a busy resort lake, passes through managed woodland, private land, promenades and settlement edges, and has frequent access to formal accommodation.

Local camping rules, landowner permissions and any restrictions around protected areas or lakeside zones must be checked locally before planning to camp outside an official campsite. Ask the relevant Gemeinde, tourist office or land manager rather than relying on assumptions.

If a legal bivouac or overnight stop is specifically permitted by a landowner or local authority, keep it discreet, arrive late, leave early and leave no trace. Do not camp on bathing lawns, promenades, agricultural land, near houses, beside lidos, around viewpoints, or in forest where access or fire restrictions apply.

Water, cooking and fire

Water and food are easiest to manage in the resort towns rather than from natural sources. Refill in Velden, Reifnitz, Klagenfurt, Krumpendorf and Pörschach before longer forest sections, especially on hot summer days.

The lake is a major bathing and resort area, but untreated lake, pond or stream water should not be relied on as drinking water unless properly treated. Trattigteich and Forstsee are scenic places on or near the route, not dependable resupply points.

Open fires are not appropriate on this route unless explicitly allowed at an official campsite or by the responsible landowner under current local rules. Forested slopes, dry summer conditions and busy recreation areas make fire discipline essential. Use campsite cooking facilities or a stove only where permitted.

Does the route suit camping?

Camping can work well if the aim is to keep costs down or stay close to the lake, but this is not a remote backpacking route. It is better suited to pre-booked campsites than to carrying a tent in the hope of finding informal places to sleep.

Because the trail has excellent train, bus and boat links, a lighter approach is often more practical: camp in one or two lakeside bases and use public transport to walk individual stages, or book campsites stage-by-stage and carry only what is needed. In high summer, factor in heat on paved shore sections and carry enough water between towns.

Food, Water and Resupply

The Wörthersee Rundwanderweg is one of the easier Austrian multi-day walks for resupply because every official stage starts and ends in a lakeside resort. Food planning is mainly about the gaps between resorts, seasonal opening hours and carrying enough water for hot, exposed promenade or road sections in summer.

Do not treat the route as a remote trail. Velden am Wörthersee, Reifnitz, Klagenfurt am Wörthersee, Pörschach am Wörthersee and the other lakeside settlements are the places to eat, shop and refill. The quieter forest sections above the shore are where food and water become limited.

Where food is easiest

Food is easiest at the stage towns: Velden, Reifnitz, Klagenfurt, Pörschach, plus Krumpendorf and Maria Wörth on or near the route. These are resort settlements with hotels, guesthouses, Gasthöfe/Pensionen, campsites and lakeside visitor infrastructure, so most walkers can plan around breakfasts at accommodation, a packed lunch, and dinner at the next overnight stop.

Klagenfurt am Wörthersee is the main hub on the route and the best place to solve any resupply problem. Velden and Pörschach are also practical places to stock up before starting a stage. Specific shop, café, restaurant and petrol-station opening times should be checked before travelling, especially outside the main summer season.

The least convenient food stretches are the hillier and more wooded parts: Velden to Reifnitz via Trattnigteich, Maria Wörth and the Pyramidenkogel area, and Pörschach to Velden via Forstsee. Carry lunch or snacks on these stages rather than relying on finding food exactly when needed.

Water and refills

The safest water strategy is to refill from accommodation, cafés, restaurants or other staffed services in the stage towns and resorts. Do not rely on unnamed fountains or taps unless they are clearly signed as drinking water.

Natural water is visible throughout the walk — Wörthersee itself, Trattnigteich and Forstsee are all on or near the route — but lake and pond water should not be treated as drinking water without filtration or purification. Filtering is a fallback, not the normal plan for this trail.

In mild weather, most walkers should start each stage with enough water to reach the next resort comfortably. In high summer, carry more than usual: the route has shaded beech and conifer forest, but also hot paved promenade and minor-road sections near the shore, and the climb towards the Pyramidenkogel can feel much hotter than the map suggests.

Stage-by-stage food and water planning

Section	Food availability	Water availability	Notes
Velden am Wörthersee to Reifnitz	Good at Velden and Reifnitz; limited through the wooded south-shore sections. Maria Wörth is the main intermediate settlement.	Refill before leaving Velden and again in settled areas where available. Natural water at Trattnigteich and Wörthersee should be filtered or treated if used.	This is the longest and most committing resupply stage because it includes the climb towards the Pyramidenkogel area. Carry lunch, snacks and extra water in hot weather.
Reifnitz to Klagenfurt am Wörthersee	Good at both ends, with the advantage of finishing in the main city hub.	Refill in Reifnitz before starting; Klagenfurt has the best end-of-stage options.	Shorter stage, so food pressure is low. Still carry water for warm lakeside sections.
Klagenfurt am Wörthersee to Pörschach am Wörthersee	Very good at Klagenfurt and Pörschach; Krumpendorf is an additional north-shore resort on the route.	Refill at the start in Klagenfurt and in resort areas such as Krumpendorf where services are open.	A longer north-shore day with a mix of promenade, settlement and wooded hillside sections. Do not leave Klagenfurt without snacks and water.
Pörschach am Wörthersee to Velden am Wörthersee	Good at Pörschach and Velden; limited around the quieter north-western hills and Forstsee.	Refill before leaving Pörschach. Forstsee is a scenic water body, not a guaranteed drinking-water source.	Carry enough food and water for the wooded section before the loop returns to Velden.

Closures and seasonal timing

Summer is peak season around Wörthersee, when resort services are at their most useful to walkers. Outside the main holiday period, opening hours can be shorter and some lakeside services may be seasonal.

Do not assume that village shops, cafés or restaurants will be open early, late, or on Sundays and public holidays. Buy the next day's breakfast or lunch the evening before where possible, and check current opening hours before relying on a specific stop.

Navigation and Waymarking

The Wörthersee Rundwanderweg is an official waymarked walking loop, marked with blue-white-blue hiking markings. It is generally straightforward to follow and is suitable for hikers with limited navigation experience, provided they can read signs carefully at junctions and keep a basic map or GPX to hand.

The trail is a dedicated hiking route, not the lakeside cycle path and not simply the shore road. This matters most around the resort towns, promenades and road sections, where several paths, cycle routes and local walking signs can overlap.

GPX and maps

A GPX track is strongly recommended, even though the route is waymarked. It is most useful when leaving or rejoining the loop at railway stations, boat docks, hotels or bathing areas, and when the route threads through built-up areas such as Velden am Wörthersee, Klagenfurt am Wörthersee, Krumpendorf am Wörthersee and Pörschach am Wörthersee.

Outdooractive and Komoot both carry mapped versions of the route, and the official Wörthersee tourism pages provide the stage structure. Download the route for offline use before starting each day; phone battery, app problems or local coverage gaps should not be allowed to become a navigation issue.

A paper hiking map covering Wörthersee is a sensible backup, especially for walkers planning detours to viewpoints, bathing places or accommodation away from the trail. Use a current local hiking map rather than a road map; exact sheet details should be checked before travelling.

Places to pay attention

The south-shore stage from Velden to Reifnitz has the most meaningful ascent and the most route-choice potential, particularly around the Pyramidenkogel. Some GPX variants treat the Pyramidenkogel summit and tower as a short signed spur or detour, while the official stage description takes the route up to the Pyramidenkogel area. Decide in advance whether the tower/summit is part of the day, and allow for the extra climb if taking it.

Around Maria Wörth and Reifnitz, the route mixes lakeside access, roads and paths near popular visitor areas. Watch for the blue-white-blue walking markings rather than following the most obvious promenade or cycle line by default.

At the east end around Klagenfurt am Wörthersee, navigation is less remote but more urban. Keep the GPX visible through park, lakefront and town-edge sections so the walking route is not confused with local paths, bus stops or the Lendkanal access routes.

On the north shore between Klagenfurt, Krumpendorf and Pörschach, the route alternates between resort edges, promenade-style walking and wooded slopes above the lake. In built-up areas, check each junction rather than assuming the path always stays directly beside the water.

On the final Pörschach to Velden stage, the trail climbs through the north-western hills and passes Forstsee before returning to Velden. Woodland paths can be muddy after rain, and junctions in forest are where an offline map is most useful.

Diversions and closures

Live trail changes should be checked shortly before setting out, especially where the route uses gullies, forest paths or signed local variants. The Römerschlucht / Roman Gorge has had a closure notice on route-planning platforms, so any diversion there should be checked before travelling.

Because the loop has frequent towns, stations, boat docks and bus access, a navigation error is rarely serious if caught early. The key is to keep checking the blue-white-blue markings and avoid drifting onto the separate cycle path or shore road for convenience unless intentionally leaving the walking route.

Terrain, Conditions and Difficulty in Practice

The Wörthersee Rundwanderweg is physically straightforward but not completely flat. Its challenge comes from repeated low-level climbs above the lake, mixed surfaces, warm weather and a few longer days, rather than from technical mountain terrain.

There is no high-alpine ground, scrambling or exposed ridge walking. Most reasonably fit walkers will find it manageable over four days, but the full loop still has about 1,500 m of cumulative ascent and should be treated as a proper multi-day walk.

Underfoot: paths, forest tracks and asphalt

Expect a varied lakeland surface rather than a continuous lakeside promenade. The route uses shaded beech and mixed conifer woodland, forest tracks, dirt paths, gravel and paved sections near resorts and along minor roads.

Outdooractive breaks the surface down as roughly one-third path, one-third forest or wilder trail and about a quarter asphalt. That is a useful practical guide: comfortable trail shoes or light walking boots are normally sufficient, but soft casual trainers are a poor choice after rain or on longer back-to-back days.

The walking route is separate from the Wörthersee cycle path and the main shore road, although it does touch built-up lakefront areas. In Velden, Reifnitz, Klagenfurt, Krumpendorf and Pörschach, expect promenade, pavement and short road or resort sections before the trail returns to quieter woodland and hillside tracks.

Climbs and descents

The trail repeatedly leaves the lake shore for wooded slopes and viewpoints, so the ascent accumulates gradually. None of the climbing is alpine, but the total is enough to matter if carrying a full pack or compressing the loop into two long days.

The main height gain is on the south side of the lake, especially around the Velden–Reifnitz stage and the Pyramidenkogel. The lake sits at about 440 m and the Pyramidenkogel reaches 851 m, so this is the biggest single hill objective on the route.

There is a small route-data nuance here: the Pyramidenkogel is the celebrated high point of the walk and is reached from the south-shore stage, but some GPX variants keep the through-route lower, around the Pirker Kogel area, and treat the summit and tower as a short signed spur. If the tower is skipped, the day remains easier; if it is included, allow time and energy for the extra climb and descent.

Stage-by-stage difficulty feel

Stage	Practical terrain feel
Velden am Wörthersee to Reifnitz	The most important stage for ascent planning, with south-shore woodland, Trattnigteich, Maria Wörth and the Pyramidenkogel area. This is where the route feels most like a hill walk rather than a lakeside stroll.

Stage	Practical terrain feel
Reifnitz to Klagenfurt am Wörthersee	A shorter stage, generally easier to manage as a walking day. It still mixes paths and lake-area sections, but the distance is modest compared with the longer stages.
Klagenfurt am Wörthersee to Pörschach am Wörthersee	One of the longer days, with more time on the feet and more built-up north-shore logistics. Fatigue, heat and asphalt are more likely to be the limiting factors than gradient.
Pörschach am Wörthersee to Velden am Wörthersee	A shorter final stage but not simply flat: the route passes through the north-western hills and the Forstsee area before returning to Velden.

Mud, heat and seasonal conditions

Woodland sections can become muddy after rain, especially on dirt paths and shaded forest tracks. The trail is not known as a boggy route, but wet leaves, damp roots and soft forest ground can make descents slower than the map distance suggests.

In high summer, the harder sections are often the open paved or shore-adjacent parts rather than the hills. Asphalt, promenade walking and minor-road sections can feel hot, particularly around the resorts, so early starts and swimming or café breaks are practical rather than indulgent.

Spring and autumn are often the most comfortable seasons for walking the full loop. The mild southern Carinthian climate can leave the trail walkable for much of the year, but daylight, services and transport timetables vary by season and should be checked before travelling.

Technical difficulty and hazards

There is no normal requirement for scrambling skills, mountain equipment or exposure tolerance. The route is waymarked with blue-white-blue markings and is supported by frequent towns, boat docks, bus links and north-shore railway stations.

The main hazards are ordinary walking hazards: slippery woodland after rain, tired legs on repeated climbs, traffic awareness on any minor-road sections, and heat on paved stretches in summer. Navigation is generally forgiving because the lake, resorts and waymarks provide regular reference points, but a GPX track or offline map is still sensible.

Livestock fields, stiles, fences and remote access obstacles are not a defining feature of this route. Planning attention is better spent on footwear, heat management, daily ascent, accommodation location and any live diversions, including possible changes around the Römerschlucht / Roman Gorge area. This should be checked before travelling.

Weather and Best Time to Walk

The Wörthersee Rundwanderweg is mainly a **spring, summer and autumn** walk. Thanks to Carinthia's mild southern climate it can be walkable for much of the year, roughly **March to November**, but the most comfortable walking conditions are usually outside the hottest summer period.

For most hikers, the best balance is **late spring or early autumn**: long enough days, generally usable forest paths, cooler climbing conditions on the hilly south-shore stage and less pressure on accommodation than in peak summer. **July and August** are excellent for swimming, with Wörthersee warming to around **25 °C**, but they are also the hottest and busiest months around Velden, Pörtlach, Krumpendorf, Klagenfurt, Reifnitz and Maria Wörth.

Season-by-season guidance

Season	What to expect	Planning advice
Spring	A good walking season once paths are clear and days lengthen. Forest sections can be muddy after rain.	Carry a waterproof layer and footwear with enough grip for wet woodland. Boat services normally begin in late April, but dates should be checked before travelling.
Summer	Warm to hot conditions, especially on paved shore, promenade and minor-road sections. Best season for bathing stops.	Start early on the longer stages, carry enough water between towns, and use shaded forest sections to your advantage. Book accommodation ahead in the main lakeside resorts.
Autumn	Often one of the best times for walking: cooler temperatures, good visibility on clear days and less heat on the climbs.	Check the end date of the Wörthersee boat service if using boats to shorten or link stages; it generally runs to October. Shorter daylight makes early starts more useful on the 18–19 km stages.
Winter	Not the normal season for planning the full loop. The route is low and non-technical, but snow, ice, wet leaves and short daylight can affect the wooded hills and the Pyramidenkogel area.	Treat winter as a flexible day-walk season rather than a reliable multi-day trek. Public transport on the north shore remains the practical fallback, but boats should not be relied on outside their operating season.

Heat and sun

The main summer issue is not altitude, but **heat reflected from paved lakeside sections** and the effort of repeated low-level climbs. The trail includes a significant amount of asphalt near resorts and the shore, and these sections can feel much hotter than the shaded beech and conifer forest above the lake.

On hot days, the longer stages — especially **Velden to Reifnitz** and **Klagenfurt to Pörtlach** — are better started early. Swimming stops are a real advantage of this route, but they should not replace carrying enough water for the walking sections between resorts.

Rain, mud and trail surface

After rain, expect the woodland paths and forest tracks to be muddy, particularly on the hillier sections above the south shore and in the north-west around Forstsee. The route is waymarked and never

becomes high-alpine, but wet roots, leaf litter and damp forest tracks can slow progress.

A lightweight waterproof and shoes with decent tread are sensible even in the main season. Trainers may be adequate in dry weather for fit walkers, but they are less forgiving after rain on the forested slopes.

Cold, snow and the Pyramidenkogel

The trail's high point is the **Pyramidenkogel at 851 m**, above Maria Wörth, with the lake at about 440 m. This is not mountain terrain, but it is still a real climb from the shore and can be cooler, windier or wetter than the lakeside resorts.

In early spring, late autumn and winter, the Pyramidenkogel and other wooded high points may be less pleasant in poor weather. If conditions are icy or visibility is poor, use the lower transport-linked towns as practical bail-out points rather than forcing the full stage.

Daylight and stage timing

The official stages are manageable in normal daylight during the main walking season, but two of them are close to 18–19 km with ascent. In spring and autumn, avoid late starts if walking **Velden–Reifnitz** or **Klagenfurt–Pörtschach** in full.

Because the loop passes regular towns, railway stations on the north shore and bus-served settlements on the south shore, it is easy to shorten a day if weather deteriorates. The Wörthersee boat service is another useful fair-weather option between late April and October, but current operating dates should be checked before relying on it.

Accommodation and seasonal services

Summer is the busiest period around Wörthersee, especially in the established lakeside resorts. If walking in July or August, book accommodation in Velden, Reifnitz, Klagenfurt, Pörtschach or nearby towns ahead rather than assuming same-day availability.

Outside the peak season, beds are still available in the region, but opening patterns and resort services can vary. Boat timetables, the Wörthersee PlusCard boat discount, Pyramidenkogel tower opening hours and any live trail diversions should be checked before travelling.

Safety Notes

The Wörthersee Rundwanderweg is a low-risk, well-serviced lakeland trail rather than a remote alpine route, but it still needs normal mountain-walking judgement. The main issues are heat on open paved sections, slippery woodland after rain, cumulative ascent, short road or promenade sections near resorts, and safe swimming if using the lake as part of the day.

For emergency assistance in Austria, dial **112**. Keep a charged phone, a power bank if navigating by phone, and the details of the next town or stage endpoint to hand.

Navigation and route-finding

The trail is waymarked with **blue-white-blue** markings and passes regular towns, resorts and transport points, so navigation is generally straightforward. Do not rely only on waymarks, especially where the walking route comes close to promenades, minor roads, cycle routes or resort paths around the lake.

Carry an offline map or downloaded GPX, and check the day's route before leaving. The Wörthersee Rundwanderweg is distinct from the lakeside cycle path and the shore road, so if the route feels as though it has become a road walk or cycle route for too long, pause and check positioning.

The **Pyramidenkogel** section is the biggest ascent of the route. Some route variants treat the summit and tower as a short spur or detour, so check the intended line before committing to the climb, especially in hot weather or late in the day.

Mobile signal and remoteness

This is a town-based walk with frequent access to Velden, Reifnitz, Klagenfurt, Krumpendorf and Pörschach, so it is not remote in the high-alpine sense. Even so, woodland sections above the shore can feel quiet, and mobile coverage should never be treated as guaranteed at every point.

Solo hikers should tell accommodation or another contact which stage is planned and when arrival is expected. The excellent train, bus and seasonal boat links make it easy to shorten a day, but timetables and operating dates should be checked before relying on them.

Weather, heat and exposure

The open shore, promenade and asphalt sections can be hot in midsummer, particularly where shade is limited. Start early on warm days, carry enough water from the towns, and use shaded forest breaks rather than pushing through the hottest part of the afternoon.

Woodland can be muddy and slippery after rain, especially on forest paths and dirt tracks. Lightweight trail shoes may be enough in dry summer conditions, but grippier footwear is safer after wet weather and on the Pyramidenkogel climb.

Spring and autumn are generally suitable seasons, but shorter days and cooler conditions matter. Leave enough daylight for the forested sections and carry an extra layer if walking outside high summer.

Roads, promenades and shared-use areas

Parts of the route use paved promenades, minor roads or resort approaches near the lake. Stay alert for traffic where the walking line uses or crosses roads, and for bicycles where paths run close to the separate lakeside cycle route.

In the lakeside towns, navigation can be more distracting than difficult: cafés, bathing areas, hotels and promenades create many side paths. Check waymarks carefully when leaving Velden, Reifnitz, Klagenfurt, Krumpendorf and Pörschach.

Water and swimming safety

Wörthersee is a major bathing lake and summer swimming is one of the attractions of the trail, but it should be treated separately from the walking day. Swim from recognised bathing areas or lidos where possible, avoid entering the water when tired or overheated, and do not rely on a swim as a substitute for carrying drinking water.

After a long, hot stage, cool down gradually before swimming. Keep valuables and navigation equipment secure if stopping at a lakeside bathing area.

Livestock and wildlife

Livestock is not a major defining hazard on this lake-and-forest route. If animals are encountered on rural or woodland edges, pass calmly, keep dogs under close control, and do not feed or approach them.

What to check before setting off each day

Before leaving each morning, check:

- the day's route and any local diversions, including the **Römerschlucht / Roman Gorge** area if relevant;
- weather, temperature and the likelihood of rain or thunderstorms;
- water-carrying needs, especially for hot paved or open shore sections;
- train, bus or boat options if shortening the stage may be needed;
- seasonal boat operating dates if using lake transport;
- Pyramidenkogel tower opening hours and fees if planning to visit the tower;
- accommodation check-in arrangements at the next town;
- phone battery, offline map access and emergency contact details.

The safest approach is to treat the route as an easy-to-moderate multi-day hike with strong escape options, not as a casual lakeside stroll. Most problems are avoided by starting early in heat, checking transport before depending on it, and carrying proper footwear, water and navigation for the forested sections.

Gear Recommendations

The Wörthersee Rundwanderweg is not a remote mountain trek, so gear should be light, comfortable and suited to mixed surfaces: forest paths, gravel, paved promenades and minor-road sections. The main gear mistakes are wearing footwear that is too heavy for warm asphalt, carrying too much food, or underestimating rain, mud and heat on a route that still climbs around 1,500 m in total.

Footwear

Light hiking shoes or low-cut trail shoes are usually the best choice for most walkers. The route has no technical or high-alpine ground, but it does include woodland paths, forest tracks and hilly sections above the lake, so ordinary city trainers are not ideal if rain is forecast.

Waterproof hiking shoes can be useful in spring, autumn or after wet weather, when shaded woodland can be muddy. In high summer, breathable footwear may be more comfortable on the paved and lakeside sections around Velden, Klagenfurt, Krumpendorf and Pörschach.

Full mountain boots are generally unnecessary unless you prefer ankle support or are carrying a camping load. Whatever footwear is chosen, make sure it is comfortable on both hard asphalt and uneven forest trail.

Clothing and Weather Protection

Pack for a mild lakeland climate, but do not treat the walk as a flat promenade. The trail rises from the lake at about 440 m to wooded viewpoints and, if included, the Pyramidenkogel at 851 m, where wind and cooler conditions are more likely.

A practical clothing system is:

- lightweight walking trousers or shorts, depending on season
- a breathable base layer
- a thin fleece or warm mid-layer
- a waterproof jacket
- a cap or sun hat for open shore sections
- spare socks, especially if walking the full loop over several days

Waterproof trousers are optional in settled summer weather but sensible in spring, autumn or on a poor forecast. The forested slopes give shade, but the open lakefront and asphalt sections can feel very hot in midsummer.

Navigation

The loop is waymarked with blue-white-blue markings and passes frequent towns, resorts and transport points, so navigation is straightforward by long-distance walking standards. Even so, carry an offline map or GPX track on a phone, especially for the forested sections above the shore and around the Pyramidenkogel, Forstsee and the north-western hills.

A paper map is useful but not essential for confident navigators using offline mapping. Do not rely entirely on mobile signal or live data for route-finding; keep the route available offline and carry enough battery for a full day.

Trail diversions can occur, including around gorges or forest paths. This should be checked before travelling.

Water and Food Carry

Water capacity can be modest because every stage ends in or near a resort town, and the route links places such as Velden, Reifnitz, Klagenfurt, Pörschach and Krumpendorf. For most walkers, 1.5–2 litres is a sensible daytime capacity, with more in hot summer weather or when climbing the south-shore stage towards the Pyramidenkogel.

Food carry should also be light. The trail is town-based rather than remote, so a packed lunch, snacks and emergency calories are usually enough between stage towns. Do not assume every short section has an open café or shop exactly when needed; seasonal opening hours around the lake should be checked before relying on them.

Trekking Poles

Trekking poles are optional. They are useful on the longer hilly sections, particularly the Velden–Reifnitz stage with the climb towards the Pyramidenkogel and the final Pörschach–Velden stage through the north-western hills near Forstsee.

Poles are less useful on paved promenades and town sections, where they can be awkward. Collapsible poles are the most practical option if you want support on climbs but prefer to stow them around resorts and transport links.

Power, Phone and Documents

A phone is valuable on this route for offline maps, accommodation details, transport checks and weather updates. Carry a small power bank if using GPS throughout the day or if section-hiking with boat, train or bus connections.

Keep hotel bookings, ID, payment card and some cash easily accessible. Austria uses the euro, and small purchases in resort areas are usually simple, but it is still sensible not to depend on one payment method.

Sun, Heat and Insects

Summer gear should include sunscreen, sunglasses and a hat. The lake can be warm enough for swimming in summer, and many walkers combine hiking with bathing stops, so a compact swim kit and small towel are worth considering.

Insect repellent is useful in warm weather, particularly near the lake, reed-fringed bays, ponds such as Trattnigteich, and shaded woodland. A light long-sleeved layer can help in the evening as well as in the forest.

Gear for Inn-to-Inn Walkers

Inn-to-inn walkers can keep the pack small. Accommodation is concentrated in the lakeside resorts, so there is no need to carry cooking equipment, a tent or several days of food.

A typical inn-to-inn load should focus on:

- comfortable day-hiking footwear
- waterproof jacket and light warm layer
- one change of walking clothes
- basic toiletries and personal medication
- phone with offline route, charger and small power bank
- water, lunch and snacks for the day
- swimwear and a compact towel in summer

A 20–30 litre pack is usually sufficient if luggage is not being transferred. If using luggage transfer or basing yourself in one town and walking stages by public transport, a smaller daypack is enough.

Gear for Campers

Camping is possible only where using established campsites or permitted accommodation options around the lake. Campsites are among the accommodation styles available in the resort towns, but exact locations, opening periods and booking rules should be checked before travelling.

Campers should still avoid overpacking. The route is not remote, so a lightweight tent, sleeping system, minimal cooking kit and one day of food at a time are more appropriate than expedition-style camping gear.

Because the trail includes asphalt, promenades and repeated ascents, heavy camping loads will make the walk feel harder than its technical grade suggests. Supportive footwear and poles become more worthwhile if carrying a full camping pack.

Gear for Fast and Section Hikers

Fast walkers and section hikers can travel very light, especially when using the railway on the north shore, buses on the south shore, or the Wörthersee boat service in season. A small running vest or daypack is enough for a single stage in settled weather.

Even on a short stage, carry a waterproof layer, water, snacks, offline navigation and enough battery to manage timetable changes. The boat service normally operates from late April to October, and current dates should be checked before relying on it.

For long two-day versions of the loop, prioritise blister prevention, sun protection and adequate water capacity. The route is easy to shorten by transport, but the cumulative ascent and hard surfaces can still punish underprepared feet.

Budget and Costs

Austria uses the euro (€). The Wörthersee Rundwanderweg is not a remote expedition, so costs are driven less by specialist logistics and more by resort-town accommodation, eating out and optional lake transport.

The cheapest versions of the walk use public transport, simple rooms or campsites, and packed lunches. The more comfortable versions stay in hotels in Velden am Wörthersee, Reifnitz, Klagenfurt am Wörthersee and Pörschach am Wörthersee, add restaurant meals, boat transfers and possibly baggage support.

Exact prices around Wörthersee vary strongly by season, especially in summer. Accommodation, boat fares, tower entry and package prices should be checked before booking.

Budget approaches

Style	How to keep costs down	Main things to check
Budget	Use campsites, hostels or simple Gasthöfe/Pensionen; travel by train, bus and on foot; carry lunches and snacks from the stage towns; avoid unnecessary taxis.	Campsite and hostel opening dates, current room rates, bus/train fares.
Mid-range	Stay in guesthouses or modest hotels in each stage town; eat dinner locally; use the boat only for selected transfers or short-cuts.	Summer availability in Velden, Pörschach and the lakeside resorts; current Wörthersee boat timetable and fares.
Comfortable	Book better hotels or lakeside accommodation, especially in the main resorts; add restaurant meals, paid attractions, baggage help or an organised package.	Peak-season hotel rates, Pyramidenkogel tower prices and opening hours, package inclusions.

Accommodation costs

Accommodation is the largest variable cost on this route. Beds are plentiful around the lake, with hotels, guesthouses, lodges, hostels and campsites concentrated in Velden, Pörschach, Krumpendorf, Klagenfurt, Reifnitz and Maria Wörth.

Summer is peak season on Wörthersee, so the same itinerary can cost noticeably more in July and August than in spring or autumn. Popular resort locations should be booked ahead, particularly if walking the standard four-stage itinerary and needing overnight stops in Reifnitz, Klagenfurt and Pörschach.

Camping can reduce costs, but it needs more planning than a hotel-based walk. Check each campsite's location, seasonal opening dates and whether it fits the day's stage before relying on it.

Food and drink

This is a town-based lakeland trail, not a wilderness route, so food logistics are straightforward. Each official stage finishes in or near a resort town, making it practical to eat in accommodation or local restaurants and to carry food for the walking day.

The forest and hill sections above the shore should still be treated as service gaps. Carry enough water, snacks and lunch for the stage, especially in hot summer weather and on the longer Velden–Reifnitz and Klagenfurt–Pörschach days.

Transport costs

One of the easiest ways to control the budget is to use public transport rather than taxis. The north shore has Südbahn railway stations at Velden, Pörschach, Krumpendorf and Klagenfurt, while buses serve the south-shore settlements including Maria Wörth and Reifnitz.

Because the route is circular and can be joined at any station or boat dock, there is no need for an expensive end-to-end transfer. Klagenfurt am Wörthersee is the main rail and bus hub, and Velden is a convenient traditional start/finish if arriving on the north-shore railway.

The Wörthersee boat service can be useful for shortening stages, returning to accommodation or turning a section into a day hike. It normally operates from late April to October, and the free Wörthersee PlusCard gives a 50% discount on boat tickets. Current boat dates, timetables, fares and discount conditions should be checked before travelling.

Taxis, luggage transfer and packages

Taxis are optional rather than essential on this trail. They are most useful for reaching accommodation away from the route, dealing with a missed bus, or shortening a stage in poor weather or heat. Agree the fare or check the operator's pricing before setting off.

Luggage transfer is also a comfort choice rather than a necessity, as the stages are short enough for most walkers to carry a light overnight pack. If luggage support is wanted, arrange it through accommodation providers or a walking-holiday operator and check exactly which towns are covered.

Operators such as Trail Angels provide organised Wörthersee Rundwanderweg options. Package pricing and inclusions should be checked carefully: accommodation standard, luggage movement, maps, support, meals and any transport extras can change the total cost significantly.

Optional extras

The Pyramidenkogel observation tower is the main paid attraction that many walkers will want to add on the south-shore stage. Opening hours and entry fees should be checked before building the climb into the day.

Swimming can be free at informal access points, but organised lidos and bathing facilities around the resorts may charge entry. Budget extra if the trip is planned around summer bathing stops as well as hiking.

The best cost-saving moves are simple: walk outside peak summer where possible, book accommodation early, use the train and bus network, carry lunches for forest sections, and use the Wörthersee PlusCard discount if taking the boat.

Luggage Transfer, Guided Tours and Support Services

How much support is needed?

The Wörthersee Rundwanderweg is one of the easier Austrian multi-day trails to organise independently. Every stage finishes in or near a lakeside resort, accommodation is plentiful in Velden am Wörthersee, Reifnitz, Klagenfurt am Wörthersee and Pörtschach am Wörthersee, and public transport gives frequent escape or shortening options.

For many walkers, a light overnight pack is enough. Luggage transfer becomes useful if travelling with children, walking in hot summer weather, staying in higher-end hotels with more luggage, or combining the hike with a longer holiday in Carinthia.

Luggage transfer

There is no need to carry camping equipment unless deliberately choosing campsites. The standard way to walk the route is hotel-to-hotel, using guesthouses, hotels, pensions or other accommodation in the stage towns.

Dedicated baggage transfer is best arranged through a walking-holiday package rather than trying to organise separate couriers stage by stage. Companies such as Trail Angels include the Wörthersee Rundwanderweg in their programme and can be used by walkers who want the accommodation, route paperwork and baggage logistics handled in one booking. Exact inclusions, prices and transfer conditions should be checked before booking.

Independent walkers who only need occasional luggage movement should ask accommodation providers in advance whether they can help arrange a taxi transfer to the next stage town. This is especially practical between the four official stage points: Velden, Reifnitz, Klagenfurt and Pörtschach. Availability and costs vary by season and should be checked before travelling.

Self-guided walking packages

Self-guided packages suit walkers who want the freedom of walking alone without managing every booking themselves. On this route, a package would normally be most useful for securing accommodation in peak summer, arranging luggage transfers, and providing route notes or GPX material for the four-stage itinerary.

Trail Angels is the main named operator associated with the Wörthersee Rundwanderweg. Before booking, check whether the package includes accommodation category, luggage transfer, emergency support, route documents, tourist taxes, any boat or bus use, and whether the Pyramidenkogel tower visit is included or paid separately.

A self-guided package is less necessary outside the busy summer season if accommodation is available and you are comfortable using the train, bus and boat network. The trail is waymarked with blue-white-blue markings and passes through regular settlements, so the logistics are much simpler than on a remote alpine trek.

Guided options

A fully guided trip is not essential for navigation or safety on this trail. The route is waymarked, non-technical and close to towns, with the main planning challenges being accommodation, heat management in summer, and choosing how to use transport links.

Guided options may still suit groups, families, corporate trips or walkers who want cultural interpretation around places such as Maria Wörth, Klagenfurt or the Pyramidenkogel area. Availability of guided walking days or local guides should be checked with local tourism offices or package operators before travelling.

Taxi, train, bus and boat support

Taxi support is useful for late arrivals, missed connections, luggage moves, or shortening a stage in poor weather. No specific taxi company needs to be built into the plan in advance unless relying on a timed transfer; in that case, book ahead through accommodation or a local operator.

Public transport is often the better first option. The north shore has rail stations at Velden, Pörschach, Krumpendorf and Klagenfurt, while buses serve the south-shore settlements including Maria Wörth and Reifnitz. The Wörthersee boat service links landing stages around the lake from late April to October, and the Wörthersee PlusCard gives a 50% discount on boat tickets.

Boat operating dates, timetables and the PlusCard discount should be checked before travelling. Outside the boat season, the railway and buses remain the main support options, with taxis filling gaps on the south shore or for evening transfers.

Shorter Hikes and Best Sections

The Wörthersee Rundwanderweg is unusually easy to shorten because it circles a lake with towns, boat landings and public transport on both shores. The north shore has the simplest rail access, with stations at Velden am Wörthersee, Pörschach am Wörthersee, Krumpendorf am Wörthersee and Klagenfurt am Wörthersee; the south shore is better served by buses and the seasonal Wörthersee boat service.

Boat services normally link the lakeside resorts from late April to October, and the Wörthersee PlusCard gives a boat-ticket discount. Timetables, operating dates and discounts should be checked before travelling.

Best for	Section	Approx. distance	Why choose it	Transport notes
Best day walk	Velden am Wörthersee to Reifnitz	~18 km	The most complete single-stage taste of the route: south-shore forest, Trattnigteich, the Pyramidenkogel area, Maria Wörth and lake views.	Velden has rail and boat access; Reifnitz is served by south-shore bus and seasonal boat.
Best easy day	Reifnitz to Klagenfurt am Wörthersee	~11 km	The shortest official stage and a good choice if distance, heat or family pace are the main concerns.	Reifnitz has bus/seasonal boat links; Klagenfurt is the main rail and bus hub.
Best weekend section	Velden am Wörthersee to Klagenfurt am Wörthersee via Reifnitz	~29 km over 2 days	Combines the south-shore highlights with an easy logistical finish in Carinthia's capital.	Start by train or boat at Velden; overnight at or near Reifnitz; finish at Klagenfurt for onward rail and bus travel.
Best 3-day section	Velden am Wörthersee to Pörschach am Wörthersee via Reifnitz and Klagenfurt	~48 km over 3 days	Covers the south shore, the east end and the main north-shore resort section, omitting only the final Pörschach–Velden leg.	Rail access at Velden, Klagenfurt and Pörschach; buses/boats help with the south-shore stage.
Best for scenery	Velden am Wörthersee to Reifnitz	~18 km	The signature scenic stage: wooded slopes, Trattnigteich, Maria Wörth and the optional climb to the Pyramidenkogel tower for the biggest panorama.	Good start access at Velden; return from Reifnitz by bus or seasonal boat.
Best for public transport	Pörschach am Wörthersee to Velden am Wörthersee	~13 km	A compact north-western stage with straightforward rail logistics and a quieter hill-and-lake feel around Forstsee.	Both Pörschach and Velden are on the north-shore railway.

Best for	Section	Approx. distance	Why choose it	Transport notes
Best for villages and accommodation	Klagenfurt am Wörthersee to Pörschach am Wörthersee	~19 km	Links the lake end at Klagenfurt with Krumpendorf and Pörschach, giving frequent resort services, promenades and plenty of places to stay.	Rail access at Klagenfurt, Krumpendorf and Pörschach makes shortening easy.

Best Day Walk: Velden am Wörthersee to Reifnitz

This is the strongest one-day choice if only one stage of the Wörthersee Rundwanderweg is possible. It starts from Velden, climbs through south-shore woodland, passes Trattnigteich and reaches the Pyramidenkogel area above Maria Wörth before continuing towards Reifnitz.

The stage is not technically difficult, but it is the hillier, more demanding day-walk option. In hot weather, start early, carry enough water and allow time for the climb towards the Pyramidenkogel, especially if adding the observation tower.

Velden is easy to reach by rail on the north-shore line. From Reifnitz, use the south-shore bus or seasonal boat service back around the lake; current timetables should be checked before travelling.

Best Easy Day: Reifnitz to Klagenfurt am Wörthersee

At around 11 km, Reifnitz to Klagenfurt is the shortest official stage and the best choice for beginners, families or walkers wanting a lower-commitment taste of the route. It still gives a proper point-to-point walk without requiring a long day or a heavy pack.

The finish in Klagenfurt is particularly useful, as the city is the main transport hub on the lake. This also makes the stage a good bad-weather or high-summer option, when a shorter distance and reliable exit transport matter more than covering maximum ground.

Best Weekend Section: Velden to Klagenfurt via Reifnitz

For a two-day version, walk the first two official stages from Velden to Reifnitz and then on to Klagenfurt. This gives the best concentration of south-shore character: forest, viewpoints, Maria Wörth, the Pyramidenkogel area and an easy urban finish.

The first day is the longer and hillier one at about 18 km; the second is shorter at about 11 km. Overnight in or near Reifnitz, or use bus/boat links if accommodation availability requires a nearby base.

Best 3-Day Section: Velden to Pörschach via Reifnitz and Klagenfurt

A strong three-day option is to follow the official sequence from Velden to Reifnitz, Reifnitz to Klagenfurt and Klagenfurt to Pörschach. This covers roughly 48 km and includes the south-shore high ground, the east end of the lake and the main north-shore resort stretch.

It is nearly the full experience without closing the loop back to Velden. Pörschach has rail access, so the finish is simple, and the final omitted Pörschach–Velden stage can be added later as a short standalone day.

Best Section for Public Transport: Pörtschach to Velden

Pörtschach to Velden is the easiest section to organise as a simple day hike by train. Both towns are on the north-shore railway, and the stage is a manageable distance at around 13 km.

This section also passes the quieter north-western hills around Forstsee before returning to Velden. It is a good choice when boat services are not running, as it does not rely on the south-shore bus or seasonal lake boats.

Best Section for Villages, Services and Accommodation

Klagenfurt to Pörtschach is the best section for walkers who want frequent services and easy accommodation planning. The stage links Klagenfurt, Krumpendorf and Pörtschach, all useful places for food, beds and public transport.

It is also one of the more practical stages to shorten. If the full Klagenfurt–Pörtschach distance feels too long, Krumpendorf gives an intermediate north-shore rail stop.

Camping and Low-Cost Overnight Options

Camping is possible as part of a Wörthersee hike only by planning around established campsites in the lakeside resort areas. Campsites are among the accommodation options around Velden, Pörtschach, Krumpendorf, Klagenfurt, Reifnitz and Maria Wörth, but availability is seasonal and should be checked before travelling.

The route is town-based rather than remote, so it is not suited to an improvised wild-camping approach. In peak summer, book campsites or low-cost beds ahead, especially around the main bathing resorts.

Highlights and Points of Interest

The Wörthersee Rundwanderweg is at its best when treated as a lake-and-forest walk with time built in for viewpoints, swimming stops and resort towns. The main points of interest sit naturally on the four signed stages, so extra time is easiest to add at Velden, Maria Wörth, the Pyramidenkogel, Klagenfurt, Pörschach and Forstsee.

Velden am Wörthersee and Schloss Velden

Velden is the usual start and finish point, with the Schiffsanlegestelle / boat dock opposite Schloss Velden. The castle, now a luxury hotel, is the most recognisable landmark at the west end of the lake and makes a clear, practical meeting point for the beginning or end of the loop.

The town is also one of the best places to allow spare time before setting off or after finishing. It has the services expected of a major lakeside resort, and its railway station and boat dock make it easy to shorten, pause or restart the walk.

Trattnigteich and the south-shore forest

Early on the Velden–Reifnitz stage, the route leaves the resort feel behind and enters quieter beech and mixed woodland above the south shore. Trattnigteich is a small pond in this forested section and is one of the better natural rest stops before the higher ground towards the Pyramidenkogel.

This part of the walk is useful in hot weather because the trees give more shade than the open shore sections. After rain, expect woodland paths to be muddier than the promenades and minor-road stretches nearer the lake.

Pyramidenkogel viewpoint and tower

The Pyramidenkogel is the headline viewpoint of the route. The wooded summit rises to 851 m above Maria Wörth and is crowned by a 100 m timber-and-steel observation tower, opened in 2013 and widely known as the tallest wooden viewing tower in the world.

On clear days it gives the broadest panorama of the walk: Wörthersee below, the Karawanken and Julian Alps to the south, and the Nockberge to the north. It is the most worthwhile place on the loop to spend extra time if visibility is good.

The climb is also one of the more demanding parts of an otherwise easy-to-moderate trail. Some route variants treat the final approach to the tower as a short signed spur or detour rather than the compulsory through-line; hikers who skip it stay lower and miss the main summit viewpoint. Tower opening hours and any entry fee should be checked before travelling.

Maria Wörth peninsula and churches

Maria Wörth is the main cultural highlight of the walk. The narrow wooded peninsula, originally an island until the Glanfurt outlet was cut in 1770, carries two medieval churches and sits prominently in the lake landscape on the south-shore stage.

The first St Mary's church on the site dates to around 875 AD, giving the village a depth of history that stands out from the resort sections elsewhere on the loop. It is worth allowing time here rather than treating it as a quick pass-through, especially if walking the longer Velden–Reifnitz stage.

Reifnitz and St. Anna Church

Reifnitz is the end of the first official stage and a useful south-shore overnight stop. Above it, St. Anna Church provides another local landmark on the approach into the village area.

For many walkers, Reifnitz is also the point where the character of the trail changes from the hillier south-shore stage towards the shorter, easier stage to Klagenfurt. If walking with family members or less experienced hikers, it is a sensible place to break the route.

Klagenfurt am Wörthersee and the Lendkanal

Klagenfurt am Wörthersee is the main urban and transport stop on the loop, set at the eastern end of the lake. It is the best place to build in a half-day or overnight pause if the walk is being combined with rail travel, bus connections or a resupply.

In the city, the Lindwurm dragon fountain on Neuer Platz is the key landmark, while the Lendkanal links the old town with the lake. This makes Klagenfurt the most varied stop on the route: part lakeside stage town, part Carinthian capital.

Krumpendorf and Pörschach north-shore resorts

The Klagenfurt–Pörschach stage follows the north side of the lake through established bathing-resort territory. Krumpendorf and Pörschach both offer promenades, lidos and easy access to the water, so this is one of the best sections for swimming stops in summer.

Pörschach is a particularly useful overnight base because it sits on the north-shore railway line and marks the start of the final official stage back to Velden. If the weather is hot, this is a good place to slow the itinerary rather than pressing straight on.

Forest viewpoints above the north shore

Away from the resort fronts, the north-shore and north-western hills give repeated framed views down to Wörthersee. The route area includes viewpoints such as Zillhöhe, Hohe Gloriette and Pirker Kogel, where the appeal is less about a single summit and more about changing angles over the lake.

These woodland sections are part of what separates the Rundwanderweg from the flatter lakeside cycle path and shore road. They add ascent, shade and quieter walking, while still keeping the next resort, station or boat dock within reach.

Forstsee

Forstsee is a small, quiet lake in the north-western hills, passed on the final Pörschach–Velden stage before the loop closes. It is one of the more peaceful natural features on the route and a useful contrast to the busier Wörthersee resort shore.

This final stage is relatively short, so Forstsee is an easy place to pause without risking a late finish in Velden. It also helps make the last day feel like more than a simple return along the lake edge.

The lake itself: bathing stops and turquoise water

Wörthersee's clear blue-green water is a constant part of the walk, even when the trail climbs into the trees above the shore. In summer, the lake can warm to about 25 °C, and each resort area has bathing lidos or lake access nearby.

For a relaxed itinerary, plan one or two deliberate swim stops rather than relying on finding time at the end of the day. The most practical places are the stage towns and resort sections — Velden, Maria Wörth, Reifnitz, Klagenfurt, Krumpendorf and Pörschach — where food, transport and accommodation are close at hand.

Common Mistakes and Planning Tips

The Wörthersee Rundwanderweg is logistically easy by long-distance hiking standards, but that can make walkers too casual with planning. The main traps are underestimating the ascent, treating the lake transport as always available, and assuming a resort-based trail needs no advance bookings.

Common mistake	Better plan
Treating the route as a flat lakeside promenade	Allow for roughly 1,500 m of cumulative ascent, with repeated climbs into beech and conifer forest above the shore. The Velden–Reifnitz stage is especially important to pace properly because it includes the south-side hills and the Pyramidenkogel area.
Compressing the walk into two days without checking fitness and heat	The loop can be walked faster, but the official four-stage plan is more comfortable and leaves time for bathing stops, viewpoints and transport connections. In midsummer, long asphalt and promenade sections can feel much harder than the map suggests.
Leaving summer accommodation too late	Beds are plentiful in Velden, Reifnitz, Klagenfurt, Krumpendorf, Pörschach and nearby resorts, but Wörthersee is a busy summer holiday area. Book early for July, August, weekends and lake-view resort towns.
Assuming the boat will solve every timing problem	The Wörthersee boat service is seasonal, broadly late April to October, and timetables matter if it is being used to shorten or skip a stage. Current operating dates, times and the Wörthersee PlusCard boat discount should be checked before travelling.
Forgetting that rail is mainly on the north shore	Velden, Pörschach, Krumpendorf and Klagenfurt are straightforward by train on the Südbahn, but the south-shore stage through Maria Wörth and Reifnitz relies more on bus or boat links. Plan south-shore bail-out points more carefully than the north shore.
Following the cycle path or shore road instead of the walking route	The Rundwanderweg is a marked hiking trail with blue-white-blue markings and is distinct from the lakeside cycle route and road. If the route suddenly feels too road-based for too long, pause and check the map rather than simply following the lake.
Relying only on waymarks	The waymarking is frequent, but towns, promenades and road crossings can still create wrong turns. Carry an offline map or GPX, especially through resort edges and forest sections above the shore.
Using an old GPX without checking diversions	Trail conditions and diversions can change, particularly in wooded gullies and local path sections. The Römerschlucht (Roman Gorge) has been affected by closure notices, so live route information should be checked before setting out.
Misunderstanding the Pyramidenkogel high point	The Pyramidenkogel is the celebrated high point above Maria Wörth, but some GPX variants treat the summit and tower as a short spur rather than the through-line. Decide in advance whether to include the tower, and check opening hours and fees before relying on it as a stop.
Carrying too little water because the lake is always nearby	The trail often climbs above the shore through forest, so the lake may be visible but not directly accessible. Start each stage with enough water for the hilly sections, particularly in hot weather between Velden and Reifnitz and on the final stage via Forstsee.

Common mistake	Better plan
Assuming every refreshment stop will be open	The route links resort towns, but opening hours vary by season, day of week and weather. Carry snacks and do not plan a long forest section around a single café or lido being open.
Underestimating mud after rain	Much of the route uses forest tracks, dirt paths and woodland trails. Lightweight shoes are fine for many walkers in dry weather, but after rain the beech-forest sections can be muddy, so footwear should still have proper grip.
Starting too late on hot summer days	The open shore, promenade and asphalt sections can be exposed and hot. Start early, use the shaded forest sections well, and keep bathing stops as a bonus rather than a substitute for carrying enough water.
Planning the loop as if Velden is compulsory	Velden is the usual start and finish, but the route is circular and can be joined at boat docks or railway stations around the lake. If accommodation or transport works better from Klagenfurt, Pörschach, Krumpendorf or another lakeside stop, the stage order can be adjusted.

A sensible plan is to book accommodation first, then match stage starts to train, bus or boat options. This route is forgiving because public transport serves every stage, but the easiest itineraries are still the ones built around actual timetables rather than assumptions.

Final Advice

The Wörthersee Rundwanderweg is best for walkers who want a scenic, low-stress multi-day route with strong public transport, regular towns, swimming opportunities and no technical mountain ground. It suits reasonably fit hikers, families and first-time long-distance walkers, provided the cumulative ascent, summer heat and paved sections are not underestimated.

The main planning task is choosing how to use the lake's transport network. The full four-stage loop gives the most satisfying sense of circling Wörthersee, but the railway on the north shore, buses on the south shore and seasonal boat service make this one of the easiest Austrian trails to split into day walks or shorten if weather, energy or time runs out.

The south-shore stage from Velden to Reifnitz is the key day to plan carefully. It includes the climb towards the Pyramidenkogel and the most celebrated views, with Maria Wörth and the tower area forming the scenic heart of the route. Check Pyramidenkogel tower opening hours and any fees before relying on a visit, and be aware that some route variants treat the tower summit as a short detour rather than the direct through-line.

For most hikers, the best overall experience is the standard 3–4 day itinerary rather than compressing the route into two long days. The distances are modest, but the point of this trail is not speed: bathing stops, forest viewpoints, lakeside towns and flexible transport are part of what make it worthwhile.

Before travelling, check current Wörthersee boat-service dates, the Wörthersee PlusCard boat discount, accommodation availability in peak summer, and any live trail diversions such as around the Römerschlucht. In hot weather, start early, carry enough water between resort stops and expect the open promenade and asphalt sections to feel warmer than the map suggests.