

2026



PRESS RELEASE

Fort Kniepass: The destination in Salzburg's Saalachtal valley for border crossers, explorers & food connoisseurs

Fort Kniepass is an ideal destination for locals and visitors to the Salzburg Saalachtal valley and offers a mix of action, culture and regional cuisine. There's the VIPER SLIDE, the longest and highest tube slide in the Alps and an exciting exhibition with an adventure trail on the theme of 'borders'. The historic Kniepass fortifications offer unforgettable experiences for all ages, while 'Fort Kulinarik' is the perfect place for a short break, providing regional, modern cuisine and a shop selling high-quality souvenirs.

VIPER SLIDE: The longest and highest tube slide in the Alps

At Fort Kniepass in Unken, an absolute adrenaline rush awaits all adventure seekers. The longest **dry tube slide in the Alps** is 150 metres in length, and dropping 56 metres it's also **the highest!** The VIPER SLIDE winds spectacularly down into the valley from the historic fortress, offering a unique experience for thrill-seekers of all ages. Sliders reach speeds of up to **35 kilometres per hour** in comfortable felt beanbags, circulating a horizontal roundabout before ending the ride in the visitor centre indoor playground. An additional buzz comes from the slide's timing system and **six different light and sound effects**. Whether in a green jungle, in space or with disco lights – everyone can choose which light effects they want to accompany their ride. A **photo** is shot during each rapid ride and can be purchased as a souvenir. The VIPER SLIDE may only be used by one person at a time, and children must be at least 130 centimetres tall. The slide is open in all weather conditions.

'Chniepoz', now known as Fort Kniepass, is a border post steeped in history

Once a border post, **Fort Kniepass opened in summer 2025** in Salzburg's Saalachtal Valley and began a new chapter in its eventful history! The **first documented mention of Chniepoz** dates back to 1350, as a place that played a central role in the region as a **fortified border post**. In 1613, Archbishop

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Markus Sittikus had the rock of the narrow valley along the Saalach River blasted away to widen the opening. In 1621, during the Thirty Years' War, Archbishop Paris Lodron added further structures to the fortress. It has been **largely preserved in its original state** as it never saw any real action, and was later used as a representative building and barracks.

KniePASS adventure trail: Exciting and historical facts about border crossings

In the 14th century, Fort Kniepass was a border post *en route* between Austria and Germany. The KniePASS **adventure trail** climbs approximately 120 metres from the valley up to the Fort Kniepass fortifications – reason enough to deal with **the topic of borders**. On the climb up to the fortifications, equipped with the '**KniePASS**' **booklet**, visitors pass through **twelve stations** that detail the various types of border crossing, and explain the history of borders. Adults, youths and kids all have the opportunity to discover their own boundaries. On the way **through the historical fortifications**, visitors are immersed in Kniepass history. There is a **special game** for children, involving collecting rock paintings and solving puzzles in the KniePASS booklet. At the end of the 60–90-minute trail, visitors play through all the stations and are invited to make their own personal KniePASS evaluation to find out how they personally deal with boundaries. The KniePASS adventure trail promises a gripping mix of culture, reflection and adventure. It's a great experience for the whole family, individual tourists, school groups and company outings.

Visitor centre offers culinary delights, indoor playground and shop

Located directly on the B178, **Fort Kulinarik restaurant** offers great **culinary highlights at Fort Kniepass**. The two hosts, Eva Schevers and Thomas Hollaus, serve **specialities made from high-quality regional products**. Guests enjoy the diversity of regional cuisine in a **bright, modern and friendly atmosphere** with 90 seats. Visitors also **take away sustainable products** from the **take-away area** or **shop**, so it's perfect for anyone wanting to take flavours of the region back home. In fine weather the **garden playground** is a great place to linger in the open air, take a relaxing break or enjoy a healthy snack. The **indoor area of the visitor centre** is complemented by an **80m² indoor playground**, featuring a large rock formation, nets, a thrilling slide, a marble run and building elements, for plenty of action and fun. While the adults have a coffee, the children can let off steam building, balancing and climbing, testing their dexterity and creativity.

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Fermentation centre at Fort Kulinarik to enjoy, marvel and learn

The **fermentation centre** is a **pioneering culinary project** implemented as part of the visitor centre, offering delicious **fermented products** and a **comprehensive range of training courses** for interested individuals. "People interested in fermentation gain an insight into fermentation techniques, and develop an awareness of healthy and sustainable nutrition," says fermentation and nutrition expert Karin Buchart. 'Fort Kulinarik' is a worthwhile culinary stop for excursion guests and **a meeting place for local people**. An up-to-date overview of all workshops and events at the Fermentation Centre can be found on the website www.fort-kniepass.at.

New open-air arena within historic walls for events that transcend borders

Another new feature at Fort Kniepass is the **open-air arena**. According to Elisabeth Schratl, administrator of Fort Kniepass: "From now on, up to **500 visitors** will be able to enjoy **concerts, theatre performances, shows and presentations** here. The arena represents a further step on the way to connecting past and present, combining historical heritage with contemporary culture. One of the overarching aims of the revitalisation measures was to bring Fort Kniepass back to life as a place of history, while creating **a lively space for a variety of cultural events**."

An up-to-date overview of all events and precise dates is available on the website.

www.fort-kniepass.at.

Offers for school classes, coach tourists & groups

Fort Kniepass is a great place to visit for individuals, and an ideal destination for school classes and other larger groups. Various **themed and specialised tours for groups** offer visitors an even deeper insight into the fort's eventful history. On the **'We conquer Kniepass!' tour, school classes and groups of children** embark on a journey of discovery to explore the secrets within the historic walls until, finally, they race down the VIPER SLIDE at breath-taking speeds. The **special group tour for adults** focuses on the question: **'What is a FORT?'** The fort is easily accessible for groups thanks to its ideal transport links with a public bus stop and bus parking spaces, which is another plus point for groups and school classes. 'Fort Kulinarik' restaurant is happy to cater for groups with customisable menus and offers various workshops for all ages in the in-house fermentation centre.

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Opening hours 2026

May, June, September, October and 1st and 2nd November

Restaurant	08.08 – 18.00, Wednesdays closed
Slide/adventure trail and fort	10.00 – 17.00, Wednesdays closed

July, August

Restaurant	08.08 – 18.00, No closing day
Slide/adventure trail and fort	09.00 – 18.00, No closing day

5 December to 6 April

Restaurant	08.08 – 18.00, Wednesdays closed
Slide/adventure trail and fort	10.00 – 17.00, Wednesdays closed

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