

## MPREIS Supermarkets by Laura Neilson

I know I'm not alone in my love for grocery shopping in foreign countries. It's a great way to get a sense of a country's consumer culture - not just by seeing what the people of that country buy, but also the particular ways that all the product are packaged and displayed. But what exactly does an Austrian [MPREIS](#) grocery store, self-dubbed "The Seriously Sexy Supermarket" sell? The same things as any other local supermarket, only in a seriously cool and modern setting.



*Telfs, photo by Thomas Jantscher*

It's rare to come across a supermarket that's as revealing on the outside as it is for what's inside, but that's exactly what these stores achieve. For the last fifteen years, the Austrian chain has commissioned a steady stream of up and coming architects to design buildings that make the most of their mountainous settings in the Tyrolean Alps. With the exception of its bright red logo, each MPREIS location differs from the next, making any of its 150-plus stores a worthwhile destination - even if you're just picking up a box of muesli.



*Achenkirch, photo by Lukas Schaller*

Architect [Hans Peter Machne's design in Osttirol](#) is an awesome, space-age sloping structure that looks just as cool at night as it does in bright daylight. A market in [Telfs, designed by Peter Lorenz](#), bears a similar aesthetic while the chain's [Giner & Wucherer-designed Achenkirch store](#) exemplifies a completely different style of design. Wooden and curved, the building stands up beautifully against its alpine surroundings.



*Matri Osttirol, photo by Paul Ott*

The construction of the buildings themselves consist of natural and ecological materials such as wood and stone. In addition to the increased use of geothermal heating technologies and the presence of secondary rooms with built-in motion sensors to control the lighting and other conditions, designers also capitalize on the presence of sunlight to reduce electricity usage (as seen in [Niederndorf](#), where the store's outer walls are primarily see-through). Some might consider grocery shopping a mundane task, but clearly MPREIS customers might argue otherwise.



*Niederndorf, photo by Thomas Jantscher*