

## Winter in Austria: Our Favourite Ski Resorts

As days grow shorter and we approach the end of another wonderful summer, it's high time we remembered: the Starks are always right eventually. Winter is coming. And what a winter we have in store for you this year in Austria.

Austria remains one of the top winter destinations for British tourists, and for good reason. There is no other nation on earth who holds winter so dearly in their hearts. This winter is all about Lebensgefühl - that special something that makes Austria a unique place to visit. The joy and vivacious lust for life, of the natural world, and of the community and culture that permeates Austrian culture is the reason that the Brits keep going back!

But where to go? And what makes this winter special? Let us tell you some of the things we've got in store for you.

### Winter in Tirol

#### Innsbruck

The [Innsbruck](#) region is once again getting ready for a busy ski season. Known for its blend of urban and alpine experiences, the area offers a wide range of activities. Everything from freeriding in the Nordkette or night skiing under the stars, all the way to hot drinks at the Christmas market or luxury spa hotels in the city itself. If you love winter and winter sports, you'll be spoiled for choice!

The Olympia Ski World, spread across 13 ski areas, can all be accessed with the [SKI plus CITY pass](#), including no less than 308 km of pistes, 111 lifts and cable cars, with many accessible right from the heart of the city. For those who don't wish to ski or board, there are more than 20 sightseeing and cultural activities to choose from, including the [Bergisel ski jump](#) (to visit, not jump off), the [Swarovski Crystal Worlds](#) and the [alpine zoo](#). The area is perfect for families with children because of the ease of access and the wide range of options to keep the kids amused!

NEW FOR 2024/25:

- Axamer Lizum: The Birgitzköpflhaus restaurant has [reopened](#) after several years.
- Stubaital: A new [Explorer Hotel](#) built to run with a very low carbon footprint.

#### Paznaun-Ischgl

[Paznaun-Ischgl](#) remains a top destination, especially with thanks to the Silvretta Arena, which spans across the Swiss border. The region caters to diverse groups with its varied terrain and dedicated areas for families, freestylers, and experts.

Ischgl and its neighbouring resorts Galtür, Kappl, and See form one of the largest linked, cross-border ski areas in the Alps, featuring 364 km of snow-sure slopes (up until early May),

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45 state-of-the-art gondolas and chairlifts, and plenty of off-piste options for freeriders and thrill seekers.

## **Arlberg**

The [Arlberg region](#), which spans from Tirol to Vorarlberg, is home to five legendary holiday spots: sporty St. Anton, Lech, famous for its award-winning restaurants, popular ski hideaway Zürs, historic St. Christoph, and family-friendly Stuben. The Arlberg is one of the top 5 resorts in the world and is often known as the "cradle of alpine skiing", boasting guaranteed snow, the largest connected ski area in Austria (with more than 300 km of marked ski runs and 87 lifts), and authentic Tyrolean charm and winter fun. The [Arlberg WellCom](#) and the [Wellnesspark Arlberg Stanzertal extern](#) are perfect for winding down after an day on the slopes.

Skiing is in the locals' blood in the Arlberg region, it has been part of everyday life here for more than 100 years, so there's nowhere better equipped to provide an authentic winter experience with a touch of luxury.

## **St. Johann in Tirol**

[St. Johann in Tirol](#) is located right in the heart of the Kitzbühel Alps and makes the perfect spot for family holidays or a quieter, more traditional Tyrolean experience. It's less crowded than some of its neighbours but still offers well-maintained slopes and stunning alpine scenery.

Don't be fooled though, there is no shortage of skiing. St. Johann itself boasts 42 km of slopes, but if that's not enough, the [3 Länder Freizeit Arena ski pass](#) gives you access to 171 km of pistes, or the [Super Ski Card](#) tops out at a whopping 2,750 km plus 3 glaciers.

Most of the hotels in the region are family run, giving that extra personal touch, and children are well catered for with ski schools, tobogganing, Segway tours and special kids' programmes.

## **Gurgl in Ötztal**

Located in Tirol's Ötztal valley, [Gurgl](#) is surrounded by snow-covered peaks over 3,000m high. It boasts reliable snow conditions, premium ski-in/ski-out hotels, gourmet dining options, and an international flair, making it a hidden gem for those who appreciate the finer things in life. It's become famous amongst tourists seeking spa and wellness getaways in winter - outdoor winter hot tubs are increasingly common!

For skiers, there is an astounding 112 km of pistes and 25 lifts with virtually no waiting times. And if this isn't enough, the [Ötztal Super Skipass](#) extends access to five additional winter resorts: Sölden, Hochoetz-Kühtai, Niederthai, Gries, and Vent. If you can't get enough during the day, you can try [early morning skiing](#) or [floodlit night skiing and tobogganing](#).

#### NEW FOR WINTER 2024/25:

- Ötztal gets its [first official ski touring](#) route: Starting at the valley station of the Ochsengarten cable car in Hochoetz, the five-kilometer-long tour leads through the forest to the mountain station at 2,020 m.

### Ski Juwel Alpbachtal Wildschönau

[Ski Juwel](#) has garnered a reputation as one of Tirol's hidden gems. The family-friendly ski resort has a good mix of slopes for all abilities and caters well to families and those seeking a more relaxed style of ski holiday. Just an hour from Innsbruck, [Ski Juwel Alpbachtal Wildschönau](#), is home to Austria's "chocolate box" villages like Alpbach and Niederau, and is ranked as one of the most child-friendly ski resorts in Tirol. Skiers and snowboarders can look forward to 113 km of slopes, 45 lifts, 10 ski schools, snow parks and the kind of picturesque untouched nature that you can only find in the Austrian Alps.

For those looking for something a little special you can [book early morning](#) and [night skiing](#), co-piloting sessions on [piste bashers](#), tobogganing, and visit the [Top of Alpbachtal](#), featuring an observation tower, a restaurant, and a platform with stunning panoramic views.

### Zillertal

The [Zillertal](#) is one of Tirol's largest ski areas, featuring a variety of slopes that cater to both beginners and experts. The area is famous for its 180 lifts, 544 km of slopes, and Austria's steepest run (Harakiri - 78% gradient). The [Zillertal Superskipass](#) gives unlimited access to all winter resorts in the area as well as free public transport to get you around the valley. Thanks to its high location- the ski areas in Zillertal range from 630 to 3,250 metres above sea level - skiing here is possible well into April.

However, it's not just downhill skiing. Zillertal is equally renowned for its off-piste and freeride skiing. The region also features cross-country and winter hiking trails, traditional huts, family-run hotels, and unique adventures like the [Hintertux Nature Ice Palace](#), making it a dream destination for winter holidays.

#### NEW FOR WINTER 2024/25:

- The new [8-seater heated chairlift](#) from Doppelmayr will replace the old 4-seater chairlift connecting Zell am Ziller and Gerlos.
- The ultra-modern Duxer X-Press 6-seater chairlift replaces the old Duxeralmbahn 4-seater chairlift

### Kitzbühel

[Kitzbühel](#) is one of the most famous resorts in Austria due to hosting the Hahnenkamm race (where Dave Ryding made history as the first Brit to win a World Cup race!). It is considered

one of the birthplaces of alpine skiing and ranks among the best and most well-known winter hotspots in the world, not to mention one of the first to open on 9th November.

With 233 km of slopes, 57 lifts, 11 ski schools, over 60 mountain huts, and up to 200 km of skiing, there's something for everyone. The adventure starts right at the hotel door: The Hahnenkamm cable car is just three minutes from the historic centre, and several descents end in the heart of the village.

Kitzbühel is more than just a ski resort these days, with culture, lifestyle, and wellness all taking a front seat. This historic resort combines urban flair with characteristic Tyrolean hospitality, offering culinary variety and exclusive shopping opportunities. Add toboggan runs, countless cross-country and winter hiking trails, a weekly activity programme, and award-winning restaurants, and it's no surprise that guests return again and again.

NEW FOR WINTER 2024/25:

- The [HENRI Hotel](#) in Kitzbühel opens in December 2024.
- The Grand Tiroliä Kitzbühel [reopens](#) with 75 new luxury rooms.

### **SkiWelt Wilder Kaiser Brixental**

[SkiWelt](#) is one of Austria's largest interconnected ski areas, offering a wide range of options. The region is famous for its well-maintained slopes and modern lift systems.

Located just an hour from Salzburg, Innsbruck, and Munich, [SkiWelt Wilder Kaiser – Brixental](#) connects nine mountain villages and has received numerous awards. It is one of the largest and most modern ski resorts globally, renowned for its commitment to sustainability. This year alone, the SkiWelt mountain railway companies have invested 27 million Euro to make the resort even more modern and sustainable.

The resort features 270 km of groomed slopes and 20 valley descents, all powered by 100% green electricity for over 20 years. Remarkably, it also introduced one of Austria's first solar-powered lifts back in 2008. What's more, SkiWelt boasts [Austria's largest night skiing resort](#) with 13 km of illuminated slopes.

NEW FOR WINTER 2024/25:

- The new [Panorama Viewpoint](#) and the family-friendly Winter Wonderland experience.

### **Serfaus-Fiss-Ladis**

[Serfaus-Fiss-Ladis](#) is a top-tier winter destination in the Austrian Alps, offering over 214 km of diverse slopes. It's highly rated for families and has a variety of kid-friendly facilities (including excellent ski schools) as well as activities beyond skiing for all ages, such as tobogganing, skating or [snow biking](#). Charming alpine villages, and breathtaking panoramic views come as a bonus. Love culinary experiences? We suggest breakfast with a view at [Sunrise Hexensee](#) or a gourmet lunch at the [Crystal Cube](#).

However, the appeal doesn't stop here: Serfaus-Fiss-Ladis also has the most sunny hours of all Austrian winter resorts (2,000 per year) and the highest mini tube in the world! Experience the perfect blend of adventure, relaxation, and stunning natural beauty at Serfaus-Fiss-Ladis.

## WINTER IN SALZBURGERLAND

### St. Johann in Salzburg

[St. Johann in Salzburg](#) is just 60 km south of the city of Salzburg and is an ideal destination for a family snow holiday. Though smaller, this resort offers a cosy and charming atmosphere, making it a good choice those travelling with kids in tow or holidaymakers looking for a quieter and more traditional ski experience.

Highlights for families include the [Hahnbaum family area](#), where children and beginners of all ages can master their first turns at the platter lift free of charge, as well as the [SoKiWo St. Johann Kids Week](#), a fun-packed adventure programme on and off the piste (3 - 7 April 2024).

St. Johann is part of [Snow Space Salzburg](#), one of Austria's five largest ski regions. It connects with Flachau, Wagrain, and Flachauwinkl/Zauchensee, featuring a total of 210 km of slopes, including two World Cup runs. Bonus: Holidaymakers can ski-in/ski-out right from their hotel door!

### Zell am See-Kaprun

As SalzburgerLand's only glacier ski resort, [Zell am See-Kaprun](#) guarantees skiing fun from October to May, thanks to the Kitzsteinhorn glacier. Winter sports enthusiasts can look forward to slopes for all ages, exciting snow parks, freeride opportunities, and stunning views of Lake Zell. The [Ski ALPINE CARD](#) links three resorts, providing access to 408 km of slopes, including the Schmittenhöhe's famous 1.3 km fun piste.

Beyond skiing, visitors can unwind at the [Tauern SPA](#) with its large heated outdoor pool, explore the area on snowshoes, enjoy torch-lit winter hikes, or take in the views from spectacular viewing platforms. Zell am See-Kaprun also offers a unique "Après-Chill" experience—a relaxed take on après-ski with open fires and lounge music. The area is known for its stunning lake views, making it a picturesque destination for your Instagram pics!

### Altenmarkt-Zauchensee

[Altenmarkt-Zauchensee](#), located in the heart of the Salzburg Sport World and the middle of Ski amadé, it is a winter wonderland that promises something for everyone, from adrenaline-pumping ski runs to cosy family adventures. With its high-altitude slopes and consistent snowfall, it's a paradise for skiers and snowboarders who crave fresh powder and stunning alpine views.

But the fun doesn't stop on the slopes—this charming Austrian destination is bursting with activities that capture the magic of winter. Imagine snowshoeing through pristine forests, gliding on a horse-drawn sleigh, or sipping hot cocoa by a roaring fire after a day of adventure. Altenmarkt-Zauchensee combines the thrill of winter sports with the warmth of traditional Austrian hospitality, making it the perfect spot for a memorable winter escape.

As always, we are happy to assist you with additional information, images, and research trips to Austria. Please get in touch at [pressuk@austria.info](mailto:pressuk@austria.info).

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