

TIROL'S HIDDEN GEMS AWAY FROM THE CROWDS

SMALL SKI AREAS, BIG ON CHARM

While names like Ischgl, Sölden and Kitzbühel are known the world over, Tirol's true diversity often shines brightest in the smallest corners. Beyond the famous winter resorts, a collection of charming ski areas awaits — compact, welcoming, and refreshingly down-to-earth. With a handful of perfectly groomed runs, short distances, and an honest, homegrown spirit, these local gems offer great value for money, a personal touch, and plenty of Alpine magic.

Whether you're a family looking for stress-free days on the slopes, a lover of authentic mountain moments, or an active all-rounder keen to try something new — Tirol's small ski areas are some of the region's best-kept secrets.

Small, special and exceptionally family-friendly

Tirol's smaller resorts are perfectly suited for families who prefer a relaxed winter holiday experience. Take **Galtür** in the Paznaun-Ischgl region, for instance: here you can cruise along 43 kilometres of peaceful, snow-sure slopes. Children can let off steam in the spacious beginners' area, while parents enjoy the mountain views and calm atmosphere far from the big name neighbours. What's more, in the early season, ski passes are available on a "1+1 special" basis, when you book a stay of at least three nights — a fantastic way for families to start the ski season.

A similar feeling awaits in the **Hochkössen ski area** in Kaiserwinkl. Wide, natural-snow slopes make it perfect for beginners, and a new dynamic pricing model rewards early bookers twice over. Children born in 2015 or later can also ski for just five euros a day with the "Snowman" ticket (Schneemann).

Family-friendliness is also top priority in the Tiroler Zugspitz Arena: **Ehrwalder Wettersteinbahnen cable cars** at the foot of the mighty Zugspitz mountain hold the Austrian Quality Seal for family-orientated services and feature a newly designed MINI Fun Slope & Trail, where children up to six years old can ski for free.

If your idea of winter paradise involves lakeside views, **Zwölferkopf** above the Achensee is a small but lovely area offering sun-drenched pistes and sweeping views across the wintry lake. Right next to the valley station, you'll also find the Planberg and Wiesen lifts in Pertisau. They're not part of the Zwölferkopf network and require a separate ticket, but the small, family-run area — with four well-kept slopes stretching over a kilometre — is perfect for children and beginners alike.

For a truly scenic experience, head to **Buchensteinwand** in the Pillersee Valley. Here, skiers and snowboarders carve turns on sunny slopes beneath the striking Jakobskreuz cross on the summit — a landmark that serves both as viewpoint, lending the mountain its distinctive identity.

Over in Osttirol, the **Golzentipp ski area** in Obertilliach offers sunny descents and plenty of off-slope charm: night walks with the local watchman, toboggan runs, and strolls through the snow-covered mountaineering village make every stay something special.

Sporty, versatile and full of adventure

If you crave variety, you won't miss out in Tirol's smaller ski areas. In the Wipptal valley, **Bergeralm** impresses with perfectly groomed slopes that delight both families and sporty skiers. Early birds can head out for the "Early Morning Ski", while those with more nocturnal tendencies enjoy illuminated pistes and toboggan runs after dark. With the Wipptal Guest Card, you can save up to 20% on multi-day passes in spring — proof that small ski areas can be big on value.

The **Glungezerbahn** near Hall-Wattens offers a different but equally appealing option - a true insider tip for nature lovers, with long panoramic runs, ski touring routes, and easy access to Innsbruck, Tirol's capital. Here, everyone finds their perfect rhythm — from laid-back cruisers to energetic adventurers.

For those who prefer a slower pace, **Kellerjochbahn** in the Silberregion Karwendel is a delight: sunny slopes, Tirol's longest toboggan run, and a family-friendly ski school concept ("Karwendolin's Ski Fun") make it perfect for families seeking a mix of learning and adventure.

Even the tiniest ski areas, like the **Imster Bergbahnen**, prove that size isn't everything. Across nine kilometres of pistes, families can enjoy the Alpine Coaster and take advantage of free children's ski weeks in January and March. While the little ones are expertly supervised, parents can carve their own carefree turns.

Pure nostalgia

And smaller still? Yes indeed. Alongside the well-known resorts, Tirol is dotted with so-called **Dorfliften (village lifts)** — small drag lifts that start right in the heart of town, ideal for children or those returning to skiing after a break. There are currently 64 of these traditional lift operations in Tirol, many of them decades old, radiating a nostalgic charm when the snow lies deep. Sometimes a slope simply springs up behind the local hotel, transforming the

hillside into a spontaneous family meeting point. One lovely example is the [mayor's lift in Navis](#).

Small ski areas, big advantages

Spend a day in one of Tirol's smaller ski areas and you'll quickly see: it's not about quantity, but quality. Here you'll find a sense of ease, warmth, and fair prices — along with decades of experience in preparing immaculate slopes. Many resorts offer family discounts, free skiing for children, or unique local touches, making them an appealing alternative to the famous ski metropolises.

More information about Tirol's ski areas can be found at www.tyrol.com/activities/sport/skiing.

With its 34 regional associations, **Tirol** is one of the leading holiday destinations in the Alps. Tirolean tourism is characterised by 200 years of history and various pioneering achievements. Summer and winter guests alike appreciate the alpine mountain landscape and nature, the high quality of service and infrastructure, as well as the welcoming hospitality. Based in Innsbruck, Tirol Werbung GmbH is part of the Lebensraum Tirol Gruppe and serves as the provincial tourism marketing organisation. Its primary mission is to enhance the allure of Tirol as a holiday destination.

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