ÖTZTAL: Winter holidays that get you moving.

From the literally superlative ski resort of Sölden and Top Quality Skiing in Gurgl to family holidays in Hochoetz and the tranquil winter wonderland of Vent, Gries and Niederthai, scenic Ötztal Valley at the heart of Tirol in Austria offers a multifaceted snow experience. Thanks to high alpine altitudes up to 3,340 meters, the ski season lasts from October well into spring. For the 2026/27 winter season, the top-class destination will welcome holiday makers with a compelling all-round package combining sports, events, relaxation and nature.

Skiers with high standards will find exactly what they are looking for in Ötztal: **six ski areas** guarantee perfectly groomed slopes and snow reliability from October to May. If purchasing a skipass for 3 or more days, it automatically upgrades to the **Ötztal Super Skipass** offering unlimited skiing across 360+ slope kilometers and all 90 mountain lifts within the valley. For those skiing on six days or more, admission to **007 ELEMENTS** James Bond Adventure World in Sölden and **Top Mountain Motorcycle Experience World** in Gurgl is also included in the skipass. High-performance mountain lifts, spectacular panoramic vista points and a varied range of lodging options - from family-run apartments to five-star hotels - underscore the region's high-quality infrastructure.

Two World Cup stages to kick off the season

Winter in Ötztal traditionally begins with top-class international sports. At the **Audi FIS Alpine Ski World Cup Opening** in **Sölden** on **24 and 25 October**, the best giant slalom skiers will compete on Rettenbach Glacier, cheered on by around 30,000 enthusiastic fans. A few weeks later, **Gurgl** takes the spotlight on **21 and 22 November**, when the women's and men's World Cup slalom races will be held on Kirchenkar slope in Hochgurgl. This makes Ötztal a venue for the international skiing elite on two separate occasions. The season also starts early for recreational skiers: following Sölden's glacier, the winter ski area opens in mid-November. In Gurgl, the mountain lifts begin operation on 19 November, while Hochoetz, Niederthai, Gries and Vent follow in December.

Variety on and off the slopes in Hochoetz

Starting **04 December**, the **Hochoetz** ski area in lower Ötztal boasts a varied yet clearly arranged snow experience. Thanks to 71 days of sunshine, the region is one of the sunniest in the country.

More than 41 snow-sure slope kilometers - reaching altitudes of up to 2,272 meters - and 15 mountain lifts promise truly relaxed skiing without long walks. A dedicated Kids Land, special kids' courses and zones for beginners create ideal conditions for novice skiers and families alike.

Together with neighboring Kühtai, the area offers nearly 90 kilometers of fine slopes and 27 mountain lifts accessible with a single ski ticket valid on two or more days.

A shuttle bus runs on a new **15-minute schedule** to ensure convenient transfers. Beyond great skiing fun, Hochoetz also offers **gentle winter activities** such as marked snowshoe trails, cleared winter hiking paths and a leisurely piste ski tour starting from Ochsengarten.

The **Happy Family Weeks** offer attractive benefits for families. Children born in 2020 or later enjoy free services, including skipass, ski lessons and five days of child supervision at the Hochoetz kindergarten. The promotional periods are between **05 and 19 December 2026**, **9 and 23 January 2027** as well as **13 and 20 March 2027.**

Sölden: Sports and lifestyle

The Heartbeat of the Alps stands for skiing on a grand scale: **147 kilometers of slopes, 31 mountain lifts, two glacier ski areas and three skiable peaks exceeding 3,000 meters** set the stage for winter sports with spectacular views and attractions like the **007 ELEMENTS** Bond Adventure World. Convenience is being further enhanced just in time for the new winter season: on Gaislachkogl, the new **Gratl 6-seater chairlift** reduces the uphill riding time from eight to around 4.2 minutes. At the same time, snowmaking systems and several slope areas will be modernized. **Mutkogl lift** on Tiefenbach Glacier has undergone technical upgrades.

The new interactive **Sölden Ski Rally** makes its grand debut on 05 December 2026. Throughout the season, regular **Sölden Parties** and **Wednesday Night Fever** events provide ongoing entertainment. From 12 to 17 April 2027, the **Electric Mountain Festival** combines a party atmosphere with sunshine skiing, featuring international acts at over 2,000 meters.

Top Quality Skiing at the Diamond of the Alps

With **112 slope kilometers and 25 mountain lifts** spanning altitudes of 1,800 to 3,080 meters, Gurgl promises a superb high alpine skiing experience. Short distances, ski-in/ski-out access and top-class hotels and restaurants make this destination a prime choice for winter sports aficionados who value comfort and premium quality.

A new highlight for the 2026/27 winter season comprises an expanded snowmaking system powered by smart water management.

A new water reservoir with a storage capacity of approximately 74,000 cubic meters on Gaisberg in Obergurgl lays the foundation for both efficient and resource-friendly snowmaking, ensuring consistently high-quality slope conditions throughout the skiing season.

Following the Audi FIS Alpine Ski World Cup races in November, another highlight is scheduled from **10 to 12 March 2027**: the ultimate **Diamond Beats** event combines skiing, alpine cooking art, orchestral soundscapes and electronic beats at 3 exceptional locations spread across the ski area.

Europe's highest motorbike museum - **TOP Mountain Motorcycle Experience World** - located in the multifunctional Top Mountain Crosspoint building, celebrates its 10th anniversary in 2026.

Winter moments for all the family

For those who prefer a slightly quieter pace, Ötztal also offers plenty of alternatives to the major ski resorts. **Niederthai, Gries and Vent** are home to small and family-friendly ski mountains, abundant nature and genuine winter exploration - including cross-country skiing, ski touring and winter hiking. Framed by winter-white slopes and snow-topped peaks, situated at an altitude of 1,880 meters in the uppermost part of Ötztal, the tranquil **mountain village of Vent** is particularly well-suited for an authentic, unhurried winter getaway.

As a perfect way to get into the holiday spirit, the Advent Market in **Längenfeld** invites visitors every Saturday before Christmas to enjoy regional delicacies, warm drinks and handmade products.

Thanks to its location at 1,550 meters, **Niederthai** kicks off the cross-country ski season fairly early. During the great **Opening on 12-13 December**, cross-country ski fans will gather for technique training workshops and free equipment testing on impeccably groomed Nordic tracks.

A very special winter gem is the **frozen lake Piburger See in Oetz**. The natural ice surface offers ice skating rinks, while cleared winter hiking trails invite visitors for strolls and a sledding hill promises fun-packed adventures. New this winter is a **free shuttle bus service to Piburg**, providing quick and convenient access to this idyllic lakeside setting.

In **Umhausen**, the area surrounding the natural swimming lake turns into an **Ice Park** from mid-November. With an ice rink stretching some 330 meters, snow sculptures, snacks and drinks options as well as equipment rentals, it is a fantastic winter outing destinations for families and groups alike.

There is also some action on the tobogganing agenda: from 07 January to 25 February 2027, tobogganing world champion **Gerald Kammerlander** will teach technique, braking and safe sledding on the natural track during a weekly workshop.

Outdoor action and Indoor Bike Park

Splendid **AREA 47**, Austria's largest outdoor adventure park located right at the entrance to Ötztal, is further expanding its winter offer. In addition to lodging options as an ideal base for nearby ski resorts, the focus is on action, biking, relaxation and culinary enjoyment. Beginners, upcoming talents and experienced riders can train regardless of the weather at the Indoor Bike Park.

Planned activities include kids' sessions, riding technique training and community events complemented by unique winter adventures such as **Ice Bath Workshops** and **Mega Swing**, which is being specially staged to provide an adrenaline rush above the snow. At panoramic **Schwarzkogl Restaurant**, AREA 47 also brings its dining expertise directly to Sölden's ski area.

Thermal waters and longevity

Those seeking relaxation will find an alpine wellness paradise at **AQUA DOME - Tirol Therme Längenfeld**: indoor and outdoor thermal pools, sauna parlors, relaxation zones and an innovative spa provide a perfectly soothing conclusion to an active day.

New additions are the two **Thermal Longevity Experience** programs, available as two- or five-day packages. Designed for people who wish to proactively maintain their vitality and performance, these programs combine scientific measurements with personalized guidance for a healthy and happy lifestyle. The overall goal is to fill life with well-being for as many years of as possible.

Traveling to Ötztal and public transport on site

In addition to a dedicated **motorway exit**, the **Ötztal-Bahnhof** express train station serves as a major transport hub for international connections. From there, **public bus lines, Ötztal Shuttles or taxis** provide transport straight to your accommodation.

Additional direct train connections (such as **DB WinterRail**) provide **a fast and convenient way to travel**. The comfy **Ötztal Shuttle** transfer service even connects the valley's holiday resorts with Innsbruck Airport, just about 50 kilometers from the valley entrance. Locally, public transport lines operate at **30-minute intervals** between Ötztal-Bahnhof and Gurgl all year round, making it easy to enjoy a car-free stay.

A **comprehensive network of free skibus shuttles** rounds off the varied **mobility options** in winter.

More detailed information: www.oetztal.com

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