

Sparkle and ski

The Austrian town of Zell am See is a winter wonderland!



Luxury lodgings

Zell am See in Austria is not just another ski resort – it's a working, living town in a dreamy lakeside location, with easy access to great ski slopes.

The aptly named Grand Hotel sits on the edge of the lake. The bedrooms are classically styled

and, when you're not admiring the gobsmacking views, you can eat and drink on the terrace overlooking the water.

The Grand's staff are friendly and efficient and kids are warmly welcomed. As well as family rooms and suites, there are little touches such as kids' menus, a juice bar and mini bathrobes. Children can

splash around in the panoramic indoor pool at any time and there's an adult-only spa area, with sauna, steam room and relaxation area.

There's a kids' club so parents can grab grown-up ski, après ski and spa time or a quiet dinner together (see 'Need to know' for the opening times). Babysitters are also available (for a fee) if you

want to make a night of it – the town's casino is close by as are bars and restaurants.

Easy skiing

There are three ski areas to choose from. Schmittenhöhe, is about a 10-minute drive away, and Kitzsteinhorn glacier in Kaprun, around 20 minutes. With its wide-open runs, Kitzsteinhorn is handy if you fancy a change of scene or if you're travelling early or late season when snow cover is less reliable. On the glacier there's more or less guaranteed skiing from October until June or even July.

Both ski areas are perfect for beginners and intermediates, with just a few black runs for experts.

A free shuttle from the hotel to Schmittenhöhe is available all

season and to Kitzsteinhorn in December and April.

The third resort, Maiskogel, is about 15 minutes from the hotel. It's really for beginners and young families and very much geared up for them, with gentle slopes and extra-patient instructors – there's even an alpine roller coaster here to cheer up children when tiny tempers start to fray!

And if you can't bear to be off the slopes for a moment, you can go night skiing three times a week at Schmittenhöhe.

Sloping off

Skiing holidays are, of course, not just about the skiing (or snowboarding). There's après ski galore in the slope side bars around Zell am See, but we really

enjoyed returning to the terrace at the Grand each afternoon for a hot chocolate – or something stronger – followed by a session in the spa and a nap before dinner.

If you're still feeling energetic after skiing, or taking a day off from it, there are many other activities to keep you occupied.

You could try cross-country skiing or ice skating on the lake when it's frozen over (or at the ice rink if it's not).

Horse-drawn sleigh rides are romantic, and tobogganing is even more heart-pumping.

Or you could just go for a walk around the lake or a wander around Zell am See's shops – as well as souvenir outlets there are some surprisingly good fashion stores, including some cool ski clothing and equipment stores.

Need to know



● Zell am See is an easy journey from the UK, making it suitable for a long weekend trip. Fly to Salzburg (why not even tag on a day or two there?) and then it's around a one and a quarter hour transfer.

● The kids' club at the Grand Hotel is for children aged 3-10 years. In the winter it's open 8.30am-12.30pm and 4.30pm-8.30pm on Mondays to Thursdays. On Fridays it's available 8.30am-8.30pm and on Saturdays 4.30pm-8.30pm. The club is closed on Sundays.

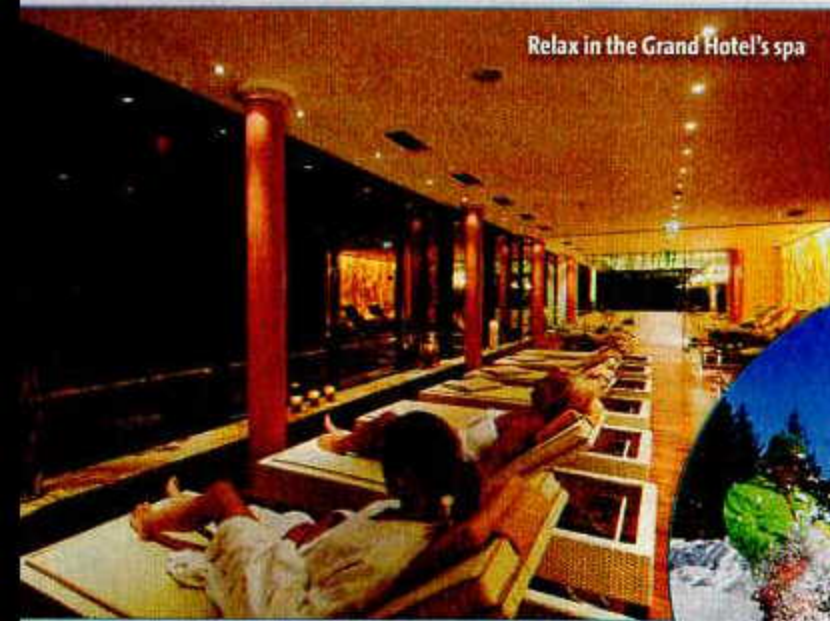
● Winter prices at the Grand Hotel start from around £105 per night for a double room and from £117 per

night for a family room. This includes half board. Packages that include ski passes and gourmet dining are also available.

● All guests at the Grand Hotel have free entry to the Classic Spa (with pool, jacuzzi, two saunas, relaxation room and gym). There's also the Grandspa, with even more facilities – entrance is free with certain room categories, or £14 per person per day with others. For details visit grandhotel-zellamsee.at.

● For more information about Zell am See and Kaprun, visit zellamsee-kaprun.com, salzburgerland.com and austria.info.

Relax in the Grand Hotel's spa



Go tobogganing

