

## Press Information



## Winter in Gastein – fascinates and invigorates

**Après-ski takes on a whole new meaning here in Gastein Valley, with its three communities of Dorfgastein, Bad Hofgastein and Bad Gastein: Skiers who love to enjoy life to the absolute full generally head straight from the pistes to one of Gastein's two spa resorts.**

Variety-packed skiing adventures await you during your winter holidays in Gastein, especially since Gastein Valley has the right slope in store for every ability level: 4 broad ski areas ranging as high as 2700 meters above sea level, plus deep-snow and moguls runs, carving hills and fantastic freerides, add all the variety you could possibly wish for in a ski getaway. Some 50 lifts along with a total of 208 kilometers of perfectly groomed, always-snowy pistes make Gastein Valley one of the most attractive ski areas in the entire province. High-alpine Sportgastein is an absolute dream for freeriders, a place where the backcountry is wide and open. The ideal elevations and extensive snowmaking coverage guarantee reliable snow conditions from the end of November until late April. One special attraction is a 140 m-long footbridge on the Stubnerkogel: Suspended 28 meters over an abyss at 2400 meters above sea level, it is the highest suspension bridge in Europe. Enthroned right across from it is an attractive viewing platform with a name that says it all: the Glocknerblick or "Glockner View". All visitors who venture out there are indeed treated to fantastic views of Austria's highest mountain, the Grossglockner (elev. 3,798m).

Far removed from the bustling ski slopes, Gastein's silent side valleys and forests invite you to set out on atmospheric snowshoe hikes, ambitious cross-country ski tours or leisurely rides snuggled up in the back of a horse-drawn sleigh, for snowy wintry enjoyment that is uniquely special.

Around 100 kilometers of winter hiking paths as well as numerous friendly huts – offering everything from a warm, rustic atmosphere to jetset-style luxury – provide the finishing touches to this idyllic picture.

### From the pistes to the spas

After a day of skiing or snowshoeing, what could be more rejuvenating than allowing your tired muscles to relax and recover in warm water? For centuries now, the healing benefits of Gastein's spring waters have been known far beyond Austria's borders. Every single day, five million liters of water bubble up from the depths of the mountains at 17 different springs. These thermal waters then flow into the Felsentherme in Bad Gastein and the Alpentherme in Bad Hofgastein – and into other wellness centers at numerous hotels in the valley. In the Gastein Healing Gallery, too, worn-out winter sports fans discover the renewed energy they need for the next day ahead. There, the air temperature lies between 37.5 and 41.5 degrees Celsius, with humidity anywhere from 70 to almost 100 percent: Both the water and air contain a healthful dose of healing radon.

### Experience a bird's-eye view of Bad Gastein's waterfall

With action-packed events such as the FIS Snowboard World Cup and Red Bull Playstreets, this community demonstrates year after year that it has its finger squarely on the pulse of the times. "Flying Waters", an attraction that can be enjoyed summer or winter, also underscores that fact. The fundamental idea behind Flying Waters isn't necessarily the great adrenaline rush you get from the ride itself: It also gives you the opportunity to experience from up in the air the fascinating

townscape, with its captivating Belle Époque architecture and an imposing waterfall. The ride is intended to be exciting on the one hand, and pure enjoyment on the other.

### **Seven cooks, seven huts – seven years of Gastein’s “Ski Toques”**

The coming winter season will see the sixth iteration of the Gastein “Ski Toques”. Top chefs from Salzburg create a special recipe, each for one Gastein ski hut, where they also explain to the in-house cook how the dish needs to be prepared. These chefs include an array of culinary stars such as brothers Karl and Rudi Obauer, Johanna Meier as well as Gastein locals Jörg Wörther, Sepp Schellhorn, Hans-Peter Berti and Robert Granitzer.

In this way, Gastein is proud to be able to treat skiers to a different “Ski Toque” hut on every day of their weeklong skiing holiday.

### **No Race No Fun – “Gastein Ski Demons” for fiendishly good skiers**

Performance tests and awards for good all-round skiers in Gastein

The “Gastein Ski Demon” was introduced back in 1957 as an award for hobby skiers. In 2013, the “Ski Demon” was adapted to today’s world and can now be earned by any good all-round skier, whose skills are judged on the piste, a moguls hill and on variant runs. . Additionally, skiers are timed on a giant-slalom course, and evaluated to determine whether they can ski downhill quickly, safely and under control. Knowing how to negotiate open terrain safely and being able to realistically judge your personal ability are also vital skills. Based on their performance, the skier will receive an award in gold, silver or bronze – a “Ski Demon” I.D., a corresponding “Ski Demon” pin to wear proudly, while their name will be listed on the website [www.skiteufel.at](http://www.skiteufel.at). Additional info about the “Ski Demon” program and sign-up opportunities is available at [www.skiteufel.at](http://www.skiteufel.at).

### **NEW: The ski map for freeriders, including insider tips**

Away from the piste. Into the total peace & quiet of nature, across virgin slopes. Freeriding is becoming more and more popular. The advantage compared to ski touring: You don’t have to struggle your way up the mountainside. Instead, you simply ride the gondola. And your major advantage compared to everyone else on the gondola: You can search out your own line, far away from all the other skiers. Gastein has long supported this trend, offering a designated freeride area in Sportgastein. Now, for the first time, there is also a map, the “Freeride Map – Hohe Tauern Select”. It shows you the very best spots in the Gastein Valley, Mölltal Glacier, Ankogel and Heiligenblut areas, along with how to get there – on skis, of course. The map is available on tear- and water-resistant paper, as it is on an App, beginning mid-November 2015. All of the off-piste runs and couloirs are depicted in so-called “Freeride Corridors” and color-coded in three difficulty levels. This practical map (scale 1:25 000) provides complete information for planning your routes, along with vital tips about avalanche prevention as well as rescue. In this way, and for the first time, the insider knowledge of local freeriders has been made accessible to everyone who is interested – in a practical 10 x 15 cm format that will slide easily into your pants’ pocket. The new map is available for € 19.50 at all lift ticket windows as well as online at [www.freeride-map.com](http://www.freeride-map.com).

### **NEW: The ski pass for freeriders**

For the first time, Gastein also offers a freeride ski pass, valid for one or two days, that spans different ski areas. It allows freeriders, for example, to ski from Mölltal Glacier, over the Schareck to Sportgastein, then ride the Goldbergbahn lift back up the mountain, ski down the north run, and continue with the Tauernschleuse train to neighboring Carinthia, before then taking the lift up the Ankogel. The new freeride ski pass for adults costs € 53 for one day, € 103 for two, and is accepted in the Gastein, Mölltal Glacier and Ankogel ski areas.

### **NEW in Gastein: “Open Faces” Freeride Event**

This year, Gastein will host “Open Faces” for the first time – one of a series of seven qualifying events for the highly prized Freeride World Tour, the ultimate discipline for freeriders. From 7 to 9 April, Gastein Valley will be transformed into a hotspot of freeriding as contestants battle it out for valuable points on the Mauskarspitze in the Schlossalm ski area.

### **Your Vacation Bonus**

The “**Gastein Card**” is a guest card accepted throughout all of Gastein Valley. True to its motto “Your Vacation Bonus”, guests receive this electronic guest card (the same dimensions as a bank card) when they check in at their accommodations. This winter, yet again, some 50 different attractions will be available to you either free of charge or at significantly discounted prices. For further information, please visit [www.card.gastein.com](http://www.card.gastein.com)

### **GASTI Gastein Family Partners**

Family winter holidays in Gastein! What do they include? A family-style atmosphere, of course, along with child-friendly offers, many recreational opportunities and child-care services, as well as comfortable accommodations in top locations. Squarely focused on the needs of families, the Gastein Family Partners have perfect offers in store for your family winter getaway to Gastein. Stringent criteria guarantee family-friendly service everywhere, from your lodgings to ski schools, ski rentals and even area ski huts. Further details can be found at: [www.family.gastein.com](http://www.family.gastein.com)

## **Gastein Winter Events 2016/17: Top events from December to April**

Gastein isn't only a wintry paradise, it is also the stage for numerous special events. A combination of traditional festivals and modern “happenings” guarantees all the variety you could wish for during your skiing vacation:

Eerie Perchten figures who take part in the **Gastein Krampus Parade** (05.-06.12.2016) will scare away all the evil spirits of winter, while the **New Year's Eve Open-Air Concert** in front of Alpentherme Bad Hofgastein promises a great atmosphere to welcome in the New Year.

[www.gastein.com/events](http://www.gastein.com/events)

### **Gastein's Advent- and Christmas Markets**

The historical town center of Bad Hofgastein, with its festively illuminated pedestrian zone, provides a unique backdrop for a festive Advent market. Authentic traditions and all kinds of variety are guaranteed by local folk-music groups, joyous wind music and reflective Nativity plays. Or experience the unique Gastein Krampus parades, as well as idyllic romance in abundance – perhaps enjoying a ride on a horse-drawn sleigh or taking a hike by torchlight through the snowy Kurpark. Also open yourself to the festive enchantment of the Advent market entitled “heimat.kunst.advent” which is held in the Merangarten in Bad Gastein.

### **A village transformed into an Advent calendar 01 – 24 December 2016**

24 families and businesses in Dorfgastein have once again expressed their willingness to add some extra Christmas magic to one of their house windows. And as is the custom everywhere during Advent, every day a new window will be opened. Guests and locals alike can continue to marvel at these windows until January 6<sup>th</sup>.

### **Gastein Krampus Parade 05 – 06 December 2016**

Gastein Valley nurtures and celebrates its local folk traditions in very special ways. For example, on 05 and 06 December groups of scary-looking Krampus figures will make their way from house to house, driving out evil spirits and rewarding children who have been good.

### **FIS Snowboard World Cup 10 – 11 January 2017**

From 10 – 11 January, the elite of snowboard sports will gather again in Bad Gastein in order to go head-to-head at the foot of the Stubnerkogel. This World Cup race will be accompanied by numerous other highlights that promise evenings and nights jam-packed with a super atmosphere. For further details about this event, please visit [www.board.gastein.com](http://www.board.gastein.com).

### **Art on Snow 28 January – 03 February 2017**

For the sixth time and with many innovations, Art on Snow, the biggest art festival in the Alps, will open its doors to the public. From 28 January until 03 February 2017, paint brushes, cameras, markers et al will take the spotlight in SalzburgerLand and bring an added splash of color to Gastein Valley!

Details about this event can be found at [www.artonsnow.com](http://www.artonsnow.com)

### **Red Bull Playstreets February 2017**

Take 10,000 screws, 140 cubic meters of wood, 4,680 cubic meters of snow and numerous members of the international freestyle-skiing elite, and blend it all together in Bad Gastein, here in the heart of SalzburgerLand, to produce a heaping-helping of Red Bull PlayStreets. Then, along with thousands of spectators, get ready for an absolutely spectacular event that is sure to get your juices flowing!

### **Snow Polo 11 – 19 February 2017**

In February, Gastein will welcome the best national polo teams for the third time. On two consecutive weekends, spectators will be treated to the ultimate in dynamic action and team spirit. Admission is free.

### **International Snow Jazz Festival Gastein 10 – 19 March 2017**

March will see the 16<sup>th</sup> edition of the international SNOW JAZZ GASTEIN festival. The musicians will put heart & soul into performances on various stages in the ski area and local event halls.

[www.jazzgastein.com](http://www.jazzgastein.com)

### **“Palms in the Alps” 18 – 19 March 2017**

“Palms in the Alps” offers a combination of exotic flair and winter magic. As the coldest season gradually draws to a close, skiing beneath warm rays of sunshine and against a unique backdrop of palm trees is one of the first true harbingers of summer. The sounds of the Caribbean and delectable cocktails will do their bit to add to the exotic flavor of this marvelous event.

## **Gastein Packages**

### **Ski & Spa Week**

**until 24.12.2016, 07.01. – 04.02.2017 and from 18.03.2017**

7 nights in your chosen accommodation & board category , incl. 6-day Ski Amadé ski pass, 1 admission each to the Alpentherme and Felsentherme spa resorts, incl. breakfast **from 444 euro**, incl. \*\*\*half-board from **639 euro**

### **Ski & Spa Weekend**

**until 24.12.2016, 07.01. – 04.02.2017 and from 18.03.2017**

3 nights in your chosen accommodation & board category , incl. 4-day Ski Amadé ski pass, 1 admission to one of the Gastein spa resorts, incl. breakfast from **279 euro**, incl. \*\*\*half-board from **362 euro**

### **Skiing & More in Gastein**

**until 24.12.2016, 07.01. – 04.02.2017 and from 18.03.2017**

7 nights, 6-day ski pass, 1 Dine-Around voucher, 1 feel-good highlight (4 hours at the spa resort or a "Ski-Relax" session in the Healing Gallery or a feel-good treatment valued at 20 euro); incl. breakfast from **468 euro**, incl. \*\*\*half-board from **664 euro**, incl. \*\*\*\*half-board from **808 euro**

**Snow Jazz Weekend**

**10. – 12.03. and 17. – 19.03.2017**

2 nights including your booked meal plan, 2-day Ski Amadé ski pass, 1 x admission to one of the Gastein spa resorts, concert tickets on Friday and Saturday, incl. breakfast from **223 euro**, incl. \*\*\*half-board from **278 euro**, incl. \*\*\*\*half-board from **319 euro**

**Easter Family Special**

**18.03.2017 until season's end**

7 nights including your booked meal plan, 6-day Ski Amadé ski pass, 1 family admission to one of Gastein's spa resorts, apartment without board **from 1,258 euro**, incl. breakfast **from 1,103 euro**, incl. \*\*\*half-board **from 1,712 euro**, incl. \*\*\*\*half-board **from 2,142 euro**