**Innsbruck**

**Categories**

**Good For**

Intermediates

Experts

Snowboarders

Après ski

Snow reliability

**Data**

**Beginner Runs**

38

**Intermediate Runs**

28

**Advanced Runs**

30

**Total Runs**

96

**Lifts**

85

**Chairs**

35

**Drags**

35

**Gondola Cable Cars**

15

**Parks**

2

**Pipes**

2

**Weather**

**Annual Snowfall**

4.5m (14.7ft).

**Overview**

Innsbruck, which is known not only as the capital city of the Tyrol but also the capital of the Alps, offers a fairly unique winter holiday proposition.

Firstly, it is unusual for most skiers to be based in a major city during a ski holiday. Many cities do have small ski areas nearby, but few snow sports enthusiasts go to cities primarily to ski. Secondly, because of its status there are all the facilities of a major city – hundreds of shops, restaurants and numerous other year-round attractions, as well as an airport and rail hub affording very easy access.

And then there’s the skiing itself. There are nine separate ski areas to explore within the Innsbruck ski resort area – mostly 20 minutes to an hour away – and all are included on a single lift pass, which also includes the bus service between the city (in many cases from the hotels) to the slopes; all for a surprisingly reasonable price. The reality is that despite its fame as a key player in the history of winter sports, winter is low season in Innsbruck meaning prices are lower as the city is keen to attract more visitors.

Innsbruck’s significance in world skiing cannot be understated. Twice host of the Winter Olympics in 1964 and 1976, it also became the first city to host three Winter Olympics when it staged the world’s first Winter Youth Olympics in 2012.

**Location**

Innsbruck is located in the province of Tyrol in western Austria.

**Website**

http://www.innsbruck.info

**Piste Map**

http://www.innsbruck.info/en/experience/winter-holidays/olympia-skiworld.html

**Hit The Slopes**

Innsbruck’s advantage in having nine ski areas on the Olympia SkiWorld lift pass means skiers can opt to go where the snow is best. The downside of that is if snow cover is generally bad, everyone will cram into the one area – usually the snowsure Stubai Glacier, with lifts ascending to 3,200m (10,400ft). Kühtai is a second good snowsure choice though, with much of the terrain between 2,000m (6,500ft) and 2,600m (8,500ft).

The other seven areas do also have relatively good snow records however, despite generally peaking 1,000m (3,250ft) lower than Stubai. The slopes here are all typically open from mid-December to early April each winter.

The choice also means there’s a wide selection of terrain, almost all of which is located between 15 and 45 minutes' drive from the city centre, and all accessible on one lift ticket. The remarkable variety adds up to around 300km (187 miles) of pistes in total, and includes the Olympic slopes of Patscherkofel at Igls and Axamer Lizum.

The Nordkettenbahn cable car goes direct from the city to the Seegrube slopes, where there are fabulous panoramic vistas. The bus-accessed slopes of Muttereralm, Rangger Köpfl or Schlick 2000 are all ideal for regular recreational skiers.

Freestyle skiers and snowboarders will enjoy trying the terrain parks at the different areas, including the Nitro Skylinepark, on the slopes above the town and in a challenging ‘inner-city’ location.

Is there a downside? Well, those who know the big ski areas of the Alps, such as the Ski Welt or Saalbach Hinterglemm in Austria, will find 250km (155m) or more of pistes, all inter-connected and all on the doorstep of their accommodation. The nine Innsbruck areas together add up to a sizable amount of skiing, but alone only average 35km (22 miles) each. That’s clearly not a problem for those skiing a different one each day - and some areas such as the Stubai Glacier are larger destinations in their own right anyway - but it might be a bit too much fuss for those who want enough doorstep skiing for a week.

Additionally, staying in Innsbruck itself is also probably not ideal for beginners, who might be better being based on the mountain at one of the very beginner-friendly resorts such as Igls.

**Innsbruck**

**Resort**

575

**Base**

575

**Top**

3200

**General**

**Beyond The Slopes**

Given its scale, it’s no surprise that there are a multitude of things to do in Innsbruck besides skiing and boarding. It’s perhaps the best choice for mixed-interest groups including both skiers and non-skiers. Innsbruck’s Guest Card gives visitors free or reduced access to some attractions and services in the city, including a popular lantern-lit hike.

Among the activities and attractions in Innsbruck are sports centres, swimming pools, cinemas, a concert hall, theatre, galleries, a casino, no less than 24 museums, and an Alpine zoo. There are also excursions organised to Salzburg, Munich and famous Bavarian castles.

The city’s Olympic winter sports heritage is very much alive, with many other winter sports (besides skiing and boarding) staging world-class competitions throughout the season. In many cases it’s possible to have a go. Ski jumping, bobsleigh, ice skating and hockey are all popular, while the brave can ride down the bobsleigh run as a passenger.

**Family Fun**

The city has lots of activities and attractions for families – the competition between establishments and the low season effort to attract business results in visitors being given a higher standard of accommodation, dining and entertainment than the ski resort norm.

The downside, as for all beginner skiers, is that families with young children will face getting to the slopes by bus. They might find it less stressful – efficient though the service is – to stay on the mountain at Igls itself (or another of the more family-friendly areas such as Mutters or Oberperfuss).

**Retail Therapy**

With 400 shops in Innsbruck, the resort is arguably the world’s best ski destination for those who like to shop as much as ski and board. As would be expected, there’s a vast choice, from quirky historic backstreet shops to boutiques and giant shopping centres such as Kaufhaus Tyrol (Maria-Theresien-Strasse 31; tel: (0512) 901 115).

The Christmas holiday season is particularly popular for shopping with its magical ambience, advent concerts and a giant Christmas tree at the heart of the Christmas market.

**Splashing Out**

Anyone aged 12 and over can take a trip down the Olympic bobsleigh run in Innsbruck (tel: (0512) 3383 8221; [www.olympiaworld.at](http://www.olympiaworld.at/)) – assuming there’s no competition or training taking place during the time of visit. Passengers will hit speeds of over 100km/h (62mph) on the 1,210m (3,600ft) track in Igls, taking in 14 turns in just one minute.

**Apres Ski**

Being a university town as well as a city and a major tourist destination, it’s no surprise that Innsbruck has a buzzing nightlife, with around 200 bars and pubs spread across the city. There are also more than a dozen nightclubs and lots of other evening activities on offer, including cinemas and the casino.

With so many establishments trying to build a reputation, the variety of fun après-ski in Innsbruck is vast. For example, there’s Brazilian nightlife at Arcos (Leopoldstrasse 1; tel: (0512) 582 423) and an Irish theme in Arthur Bailey (Kaiserjägerstrasse 4; tel: (0512) 251 541). The list is endless, and most bars are open till around 0100 – the clubs stay open later.

**Eating Out**

With about 300 different restaurants in Innsbruck and its surrounds, the enormous choice means that pretty much every taste, style and budget is catered for somewhere in the city. Everything is here, from the global chains to providers of Asian cuisine and more than a dozen pizzerias.

The elegant Europastüberl restaurant in the 5-star Grand Hotel Europa (Südtiroler Platz 2; tel: (0512) 5931; [www.grandhoteleuropa.at](http://www.grandhoteleuropa.at/)) is arguably the best in town for gourmet dining. This multi award-winning restaurant has been decorated in typical Tyrolean style and is divided into a selection of *stuben* (parlours), ranging from the Alte Stube with its two-century-old wooden panelling to the rustic Max Weiler Stube or Philippine Welser Stube.

**Transport**

**Getting There**

Nearest airport: Innsbruck Airport (INN).

Distance to resort: 4km (2.4 miles).

Driving time: 15 minutes.

Nearest railway station: Innsbruck.

Distance to resort: Within the resort

**Getting Around**

Innsbruck is a city with a modern public transport system, including a bus and tram service – parts of which are included in the ski pass cost. Taxis are another option and charge a reasonable flat rate within the city limits.

**Hotels**

There is a wide choice of accommodation, from apartments and guesthouses to hotels in Innsbruck; and as a result, there is something to suit all budgets and tastes.

**Alpinpark**

This popular 4-star hotel is 15 minutes from the station and has a ski bus stop directly outside. The hotel boasts various dining areas and a well-appointed health and beauty centre.

**Category**

Moderate

**Thoroughfare**

Pradlerstrasse 28

**Neighborhood**

XXX

**Locality**

Innsbruck

**Sub Admin Area**

XXX

**Admin Area**

XXX

**Postcode**

XXX

**Country**

Austria

**Telephone**

(0512) 348 600.

**Website**

http://www.innsbruck-hotels.at

**Adler’s Design Hotel**

A sparkling new hotel in the heart of the city, the design-conscious Adler’s Hotel features a 12th-floor restaurant and bar with stunning views.

**Category**

Luxury

**Thoroughfare**

Brunesckerstrasse 1

**Neighborhood**

XXX

**Locality**

Innsbruck

**Sub Admin Area**

XXX

**Admin Area**

XXX

**Postcode**

XXX

**Country**

Austria

**Telephone**

(0512) 563 100.

**Website**

http://www.deradler.com

**Grand Hotel Europa Tyrol**

A luxurious 5-star hotel near the station, Grand Hotel Europa Tyrol boasts one of the best restaurants in town and a stylish cocktail bar.

**Category**

Luxury

**Thoroughfare**

Südtiroler Platz 2

**Neighborhood**

XXX

**Locality**

Innsbruck

**Sub Admin Area**

XXX

**Admin Area**

XXX

**Postcode**

XXX

**Country**

Austria

**Telephone**

(0512) 5931.

**Website**

http://www.grandhoteleuropa.at

**Youth Hostel Innsbruck**

One of numerous budget accommodation options in this centrally located student-friendly city, this youth hostel is clean, comfortable and friendly.

**Category**

Cheap

**Thoroughfare**

Reichenauerstrasse 147

**Neighborhood**

XXX

**Locality**

Innsbruck

**Sub Admin Area**

XXX

**Admin Area**

XXX

**Postcode**

XXX

**Country**

Austria

**Telephone**

(0512) 346 179.

**Website**

http://www.youth-hostel-innsbruck.at