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## The 10 best resorts for non-skiers to visit this winter

You don't need to hit the slopes to make the most of winter in the mountains – these resorts offer charm, adventure and alpine serenity

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More people than ever are seeking the benefits of holidays in the snow – the soft silence, the immersion in winter nature, the magical sights – without the hurly-burly, high-adrenaline and environmentally detrimental aspects of traditional pistes. The non-ski holiday is officially in vogue.



The slow holiday specialist Inntravel has reported that bookings for its non-ski snow holidays are up by 150 per cent on last year. “When the mountains are covered in snow, and the alpine views are stretching into the distance, there’s a certain sense of serenity,” says Inntravel’s Amber Welford.

“Being on the mountain is good for wellbeing and also helps gain a greater perspective. Snow holidays for non-skiers are a growing trend because people are discovering more benefits to this sort of holiday that surpass just hitting the slopes.”

From the relaxing pursuits of winter walking, snowshoeing or yoga in the snow, to the high-octane thrills of tobogganing, snowmobiling or dog-sledging, ski resorts are brimming with activities in winter for those who have hung up their skis for good or are looking for alternative ways to spend a week in the mountains.

Here we reveal the 10 best ski resorts for non-skiers.

## 1. Samoëns, France

### Best for village vibes



The charming Samoëns is classified as a national heritage site | CREDIT: Hemis / Alamy

Though within the Grand Massif ski area, the charming village of Samoëns has retained its own identity. Indeed, it’s France’s only winter sports resort classified as a national heritage site. People come not only to ski, but to wander the old square and covered market. And for chilly dips: Samoëns hosted the 2023 World Ice Swimming



Championships, and ice swimming courses are run at Lac aux Dames. Alternatively, try cold yoga or winter rafting on the Giffre River.

**Book it:** Peak Retreats offers La Residence Club Samoëns Village from £296, self-catering, including Eurotunnel crossing, based on five sharing.

## 2. Seefeld, Austria

Best for winter walking



Seefeld has 142km of cleared winter hiking trails and 35km of snowshoe routes

Seefeld does do skiing but the main focus in this Tyrolean town is more on soft adventures. Here you'll find 245 kilometres of cross-country skiing, sled-dog workshops, biathlon try-outs and curling lessons. It's particularly brilliant for those on foot, with 142km of cleared winter hiking trails and 35km of snowshoe routes. Options range from short strolls around the Wildsee to guided moonlight tours to the Tyrol's first long-distance winter hike, through the Leutasch valley.

**Book it:** Crystal Ski Holidays offers Hotel Bergland from £1,172, all-inclusive.

## 3. Jungfrau, Switzerland

Best for dizzy heights



Jungfrau boasts Europe's longest toboggan run | CREDIT: Christof Sonderegger

You don't need special skills, ski or otherwise, to reach the Top of Europe. Trains have chugged up to 3,454m Jungfraujoch, Europe's highest railway station, for over one hundred years, offering the ultimate winter vista. Indeed, it's the excellent transport that makes this area so good for exploratory non-skiers. Trains, mountain railways and cable cars link spots like Grindelwald, Lauterbrunnen, Interlaken and Wengen, from where you can access winter hiking and tobogganing routes – including Europe's longest toboggan run.

**Book it:** Skiline offers Grindelwald's Sunstar Hotel from £1,449.

#### 4. Ukkohalla, Finland

Best for crowd-free snow





Ukkohalla is a spectacular Arctic wilderness | CREDIT: Dmitry Khrustalev / Alamy

Under-the-radar Ukkohalla is better value than Finnish Lapland's more established resorts, and less crowded too. However, this Arctic Lakeland wilderness is no less spectacular. There is a ski centre here, but Ukkohalla is also perfect for non-skiers – instead of downhill, try husky-sledging, snowshoeing or snowmobiling, or relax in the Finnish saunas and hot tub. You can also sleep in a Sky Cabin Glass Suite to keep a lookout for the northern lights.

**Book it:** Best Served Scandinavia offers four nights in a glass suite from £1,450, including some activities.

## 5. Corvara, Italy

### Best for foodies



Discover Michelin-starred cuisine in Corvara | CREDIT: Armin Terzer

Skiers love [Alta Badia](#). But maybe foodies love it more? This delicious portion of the Dolomites hosts a glut of tasty winter events: Michelin-starred chefs create dishes for mountain huts, there are sunrise powder-snow breakfasts (accessed by snowcat) and cooking experiences with local Ladin bakers. Make Corvara your base: you'll have easy access to both the mountain cable car and Michelin-starred La Stüa de Michil. The new [SkyAlps](#) London-Bolzano flight makes it quicker to reach too.

**Book it:** [Ski Solutions](#) offers La Perla from £1,695.

## 6. Beitostolen, Norway

Best for skiing – and not skiing





Enjoy the uncrowded slopes and cross-country trails of Beitostolen | CREDIT: Nick Moore / Alamy

Tucked below Jotunheimen National Park, Beitostolen is a real find for groups wanting different winter breaks. Skiers can enjoy uncrowded slopes (it's especially good for beginners). The rest can hit 320km of cross-country trails, take husky rides, ice-fish and snow raft; this escapade, involving inflatables being towed by snowmobile, was invented here. Or relax in the wilderness spa, taking a dip in a frozen lake before warming up in the hot tub with a glass of fizz.

**Book it:** [Magnetic North Travel](#) offers five nights at Beitostolen from £1,295, self-catering, excluding flights.

## 7. Ramsau bei Berchtesgaden, Germany

### Best for off-piste pleasures



Winter is a great time to visit the historic villages of Ramsau | CREDIT: bluejayphoto/Getty

The traditional Bavarian village of Ramsau, in Berchtesgaden National Park, doesn't feel like a ski resort at all. Germany's first official mountaineering village, it's a place to come for wintry forests, lakes and mountains without the swoosh of downhillers. Take snowy strolls, misty boat rides and chairlift rides to breathtaking lookouts, and visit historic villages – winter is a great time to wander Berchtesgaden's frescoed streets, which are rammed in summer. Stay at family-run Berghotel Rehlegg for mountain views, a spa and pool, and hearty German dinners.

**Book it:** [Inntravel](#) offers Berghotel Rehlegg from £1,635, full board.

## 8. Les Houches, Chamonix, France

### Best for a blast of Mont Blanc





Grab a snowy short break in Chamonix

Right below Mont Blanc, Chamonix is the ultimate outdoorsy town. There's plenty of buzz for non-skiers, from paragliding and ice climbing to bars and boutique-hopping. Alternatively, Les Houches (a short bus ride away) sits within the same mountains but is far more chilled. Both are only an hour from Geneva, making them perfect for snowy short breaks – a growing trend: heidi.com has seen a 2,300 per cent rise in two-night ski trips this year.

**Book it:** BA Holidays offers two nights at RockyPop Les Houches for £156, B&B, based on a family of four.

## 9. Château-d'Oex and Rougemont, Switzerland

### Best for food and flight





Chateau-d'Oex is the hot-air balloon capital of the Alps | CREDIT: Switzerland Tourism/Philippe Woodtli

These two Vaud villages offer easy access to great skiing – Gstaad is nearby. But there's no need to leave. Foodies will love Rougemont, a growing gastro hub of great regional and world-class restaurants – not least La Table du Valrose, awarded two Michelin stars in 2023. High-fliers will prefer Chateau-d'Oex, the hot-air balloon capital of the Alps; book a flight, come for the [International Balloon Festival](#) or visit the freshly reopened Espace Ballon museum.

**Book it:** [Hotel Ermitage](#) offers doubles from £180pn, B&B, excluding travel. IMAGE

## 10. St Johann, Austria

Best for family fun





Head to St Johann for family fun | CREDIT: Image Professionals GmbH / Alamy

Close to legendary [Kitzbühel](#), the chocolate-box town of St Johann is its lower-key sibling. With a friendly atmosphere, it's ideal for families seeking snow fun. Try winter segway tours, ziplines, snowshoeing and carriage rides, and make day trips to other pretty villages. Pick up a St Johann Card for free transport and guided winter hikes, plus handy discounts on indoor pools, cafés and museums.

**Book it:** [Crystal Ski](#) offers Hotel Park from £691.

*Unless stated otherwise prices are per person, for seven nights, half board, including flights and transfers, based on two sharing.*

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