**Zermatt**

**Categories**

**Good For**

Intermediates

Experts

Snowboarders

Non-skiers

Après ski

Summer skiing

Snow reliability

Environmental awareness

**Data**

**Beginner Runs**

36

**Intermediate Runs**

81

**Advanced Runs**

30

**Total Runs**

147

**Lifts**

56

**Chairs**

21

**Drags**

17

**Gondola Cable Cars**

18

**Parks**

1

**Pipes**

2

**Weather**

**Annual Snowfall**

3m (10ft).

**Overview**

The ski resort of Zermatt, perched in the shadow of the iconic Matterhorn, is a winning blend of excellent skiing, striking scenery and traditional village ambiance, which have helped visitor numbers soar to well over two million a year.

The resort is one of Europe's highest ski destinations, with two top T-bars that are among the 10 highest lifts in the world. These are so high that skiing on its glacial runs is offered 365 days a year – one of only two resorts worldwide where this is possible. This great height means Zermatt also offers brilliant top to bottom skiing, with runs in excess of 2,200 vertical metres (7,120ft).

Zermatt also stands out due to its link to Cervinia in Italy’s Aosta Valley. The two resorts are connected by a six-seater chairlift that actually crosses the border – a unique way to enter another country.

Besides its remarkable ski area, Zermatt's success can be put down to the draw of its car-free village, often packed with pedestrians, horse drawn carriages and numerous little electric carts that are used as taxis and goods transporters. Although traditional chalets now stand toe to toe with multimillion pound luxury resorts, Zermatt hasn’t sold its soul.

**Location**

The Swiss resort of Zermatt is located in the German-speaking area of the Valais canton in the southern Alps. It is close to the border with Italy and is linked to its Italian neighbour Cervinia by a chairlift.

**Website**

http://www.zermatt.ch

**Piste Map**

http://www.zermatt.ch/en/page.cfm/lifts\_and\_pistes/piste\_map

**Hit The Slopes**

The main winter season in Zermatt ski resort runs from late November until late April, but the resort remains open for skiing and snowboarding throughout the year on its glacier.

Zermatt's skiing is spread across three separate areas, which are all connected by ski lifts. These extend over the border into Italy to create one of the world's biggest ski regions with 365km (227 miles) of runs. The lift ticket that allows access to the whole of this vast area is Europe’s most expensive for adults, while for children it is one of the most affordable – children under nine are free, while older children pay half price.

Given the size of the ski area and the huge skiable vertical, there is skiing for all ability levels at the resort, as well as extensive off-piste terrain for freeriders alongside experienced guides. Heli-skiing is also offered.

Each of the main ski areas that make up Zermatt ski resort has a beginners’ area. The Gornergrat sector in particular is good for its easy runs, while the Rothorn zone has arguably the best nursery area just below the top of the funicular chairlift at Sunnegga.

There is countless terrain for intermediates, ranging from gradually sloping runs perfect for cruising to more challenging hard reds, particularly heading down from the Matterhorn glacier paradise area.

Zermatt offers endless attractions for expert skiers, with a good selection of black runs. But it is off-piste skiing that dominates, with options leading all the way over to Cervinia.

**Zermatt**

**Resort**

1620

**Base**

1620

**Top**

3883

**General**

**Beyond The Slopes**

Outdoor activities in Zermatt include ice skating, ice climbing, snowshoeing, tubing and winter hikes on 50km (31 miles) of marked and cleared paths. There are also 16 ice rinks where visitors can try the popular sport of curling, or the lesser-known ice-stick shooting - an Alpine version of the sport (tel: +41 27 967 6264).

There are also various museums and art galleries, including the Zermatlantis Matterhorn Museum (tel: +41 27 967 4100), which exhibits a range of historical artefacts, including the broken rope of the famous first ascent of the Matterhorn.

**Family Fun**

There are some pros and cons to staying in Zermatt for families. The primary cons are the large size of the resort, with amenities spread over quite a distance, and the fact that it can be expensive in terms of accommodation and day-to-day living.

On the other hand, lift tickets for children are either free or very reasonably priced. Children (accompanied by a paying adult) can ski free until the age of nine, receive half-price tickets until age 16, and continue to receive a discount up to 20 years of age.

There are several childcare facilities in Zermatt for younger non-skiing children. Arguably the best known is Kinderparadies Zermatt (tel: +41 27 967 7252; [www.kinderparadies-zermatt.ch](http://www.kinderparadies-zermatt.ch)), which accepts children from the age of three months. This nursery is open from 0900 to 1700 daily, English is spoken and reservations are essential.

Older children can join the Swiss Ski and Snowboard School (tel: +41 27 966 2466; [www.skischulezermatt.ch](http://www.skischulezermatt.ch/)) from age four, with lessons tailored to the child’s age and ability.

**Retail Therapy**

There are more than 300 shops in Zermatt with a wide choice of retailers selling everything from traditional souvenirs, speciality foods and wines, ski gear, fashion items and high end jewellery products.

The shops of The Matterhorn Group (tel: +41 27 966 6760; [www.matterhorn-group.ch](http://www.matterhorn-group.ch/)), are a mountain haven for shopaholics, with small independent boutiques and large international chains.

**Splashing Out**

Enjoy the adventure of staying in an igloo high on the mountain. The Gornergrat cogwheel train takes guests up to the highest igloos in the world, which come complete with hot tub ([www.iglu-dorf.com](http://www.iglu-dorf.com/)).

**Apres Ski**

Zermatt is one of the world's best choices for lively après-ski fans, with most late-night spots still pumping the music until the sun rises over the Matterhorn. It’s not all thumping music and sweaty dance floors however, as Zermatt continues to attract ever more sophisticated lounge bars that are perfect for a more refined evening.

There are more than 50 bars suitable for lively evening in Zermatt, including no fewer than five in the animated Hotel Post (tel: +41 27 967 1931; [www.hotelpost.ch](http://www.hotelpost.ch/)), which is home to the famous Broken Bar Disco in its cellar.

Bar 55 (tel: +41 27 9677676; [www.bar55-zermatt.ch](http://www.bar55-zermatt.ch)), with its large leather sofas and pool table, is one of the more laid-back options in town, known for its good drinks and friendly staff.

**Eating Out**

Zermatt offers a huge selection of restaurants with more than 170 options for diners to ponder between. As you might expect, given the global clientele here, there’s a vast choice of dining options to match, including French, Italian, Japanese, Thai and Chinese, plus many conventional Swiss eateries. Many of the best restaurants can be found on the slopes in traditional huts.

The atmospheric Walliserstube (tel: +41 27 9671151; [www.vs-stube.ch](http://www.vs-stube.ch)) is always popular, particularly for fondue, although other traditional dishes are served. The triple cheese fondue is a popular menu item, and includes original, tomato and herb in separate pots.

At the gourmet end of the scale, The Parkhotel Beau-Site's restaurant (tel: +41 27 966 6868; [www.parkhotel-beausite.ch](http://www.parkhotel-beausite.ch/)) has special grill evenings where 23 varieties of meat and 13 verities of fish are available.

Out of the many international offerings, China Garden (tel: +41 27 967 5323; [www.chinagarden-zermatt.ch](http://www.chinagarden-zermatt.ch/)), serves delicious Chinese cuisine and Capri (tel: +41 27 966 8888; [www.palacezermatt.ch/mont-cervin-palace](http://www.palacezermatt.ch/mont-cervin-palace)), is a Michelin-starred gourmet Italian restaurant.

**Transport**

**Getting There**

Nearest airport: Geneva International Airport (GVA); Zurich Airport (ZRH).

Distance to resort: 244km (152 miles); 248km (154 miles).

Driving time: 3 hours; 3 hours 30 minutes.

Nearest railway station: Zermatt.

Distance to resort: Within the resort.

**Getting Around**

Zermatt is a pedestrian-friendly resort and most points are accessible either by foot or by funicular railway or cable car/gondola. Small electric vehicles are used to help those with walking difficulties or to transport luggage when required. There is also an electric ski bus that follows a 4.5km (3-mile) route around the village, (included in the ski pass).

Private cars should be left down in the valley where there are spaces for several thousand vehicles in covered and uncovered car parks. Drivers then continue to the resort by train or taxi.

**Hotels**

Zermatt’s village base is a mixture of chocolate-box chalets and grand hotels. The chalets range from affordable to luxury, while the 120 or so hotels are mostly 3- or 4-star establishments. There are, however, an ever-increasing number of 5-star hotels in Zermatt.

**Le Petit Hotel**

Zermatt isn’t known as a budget resort, but this friendly 2-star is one of the more affordable choices around. Rooms have plenty of space and there’s a good breakfast buffet served each morning.

**Category**

Cheap

**Thoroughfare**

XXX

**Neighborhood**

XXX

**Locality**

XXX

**Sub Admin Area**

XXX

**Admin Area**

XXX

**Postcode**

XXX

**Country**

XXX

**Telephone**

+41 27 967 5900.

**Website**

www.lepetit-hotel.ch

**Coeur des Alpes**

A very popular luxury hotel, the Coeur des Alpes boats beautiful suites with in-room fireplaces and views of the Matterhorn. The on-site spa includes a small pool, outside hot tub and a sauna.

**Category**

Luxury

**Thoroughfare**

XXX

**Neighborhood**

XXX

**Locality**

XXX

**Sub Admin Area**

XXX

**Admin Area**

XXX

**Postcode**

XXX

**Country**

XXX

**Telephone**

+41 27 966 4080.

**Website**

http://www.coeurdesalpes.ch

**Bellerive Superior Hotel**

The excellent Bellerive Superior Hotel is a well-run, 3-star hotel with small spa. The establishment is beautifully presented, with a small bar situated around an open fire. A buffet breakfast is available each morning and it’s only a short walk to the resort centre.

**Category**

Moderate

**Thoroughfare**

XXX

**Neighborhood**

XXX

**Locality**

XXX

**Sub Admin Area**

XXX

**Admin Area**

XXX

**Postcode**

XXX

**Country**

XXX

**Telephone**

+41 27 966 7474.

**Website**

http://www.bellerive-zermatt.ch

**Hotel Butterfly**

This well-located Best Western 3-star hotel features friendly staff, a relaxing piano bar and a small wellness area.

**Category**

Moderate

**Thoroughfare**

XXX

**Neighborhood**

XXX

**Locality**

XXX

**Sub Admin Area**

XXX

**Admin Area**

XXX

**Postcode**

XXX

**Country**

XXX

**Telephone**

+41 27 966 4166.

**Website**

http://www.hotel-butterfly.com

**Grand Hotel Zermatterhof**

Dating back to 1879, the 5-star Grand Hotel Zermatterhof oozes elegance and luxury, with the icing on the cake being the spectacular views of the Matterhorn.

**Category**

Luxury

**Thoroughfare**

XXX

**Neighborhood**

XXX

**Locality**

XXX

**Sub Admin Area**

XXX

**Admin Area**

XXX

**Postcode**

XXX

**Country**

XXX

**Telephone**

+41 27 966 6600.

**Website**

http://www.zermatterhof.ch

**Matterhorn Hostel**

Matterhorn Hostel provides basic but well-located and affordable accommodation with shared bathroom facilities.

**Category**

Cheap

**Thoroughfare**

XXX

**Neighborhood**

XXX

**Locality**

XXX

**Sub Admin Area**

XXX

**Admin Area**

XXX

**Postcode**

XXX

**Country**

XXX

**Telephone**

+41 27 968 1919.

**Website**

www.matterhornhostel.com