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world

# Alps: These hotels have become legends in the snow

December 4, 2019

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## The "Waldhaus Sils" in the Engadin

WHe joins the legendary Engadine Ski Marathon on March 8, 2020, and has to be very strong right after the start on the Maloja Pass. Because right on the slopes towers the "Waldhaus Sils", one of the most tempting historic hotels in Switzerland – you can understand anyone who prefers to stop here, depends, relaxed, instead of trampling in the snow.

The 111-year-old five-star hotel with its charming, partly antique interior is now run by the same family in its fifth generation. With passion and sensitivity (as well as good service and top-notch cuisine), a house was created with a mind of its own, described by writer Elke Heidenreich: "I've never seen him, but I know he's here, and that's not Ghost in a white nightgown, I beg you, it's something else. "

The guestbooks overflow with the names of writers such as Thomas Mann, philosophers like Theodor Adorno or pop stars like Rod Stewart, all of whom had succumbed to the spirit of the hotel. Even presidents are among the fans: a few months ago, Frank-Walter Steinmeier was a guest.



Thomas Mann, Theodor Adorno, Rod Stewart – they had all fallen into the spirit of the hotel

Source: Waldhaus Sils

For the marathon, the "Waldhaus" has created a suitable program for the cross-country skiers: two days of physical preparation, a specially created pasta dish on the eve of the evening and a relaxing massage in the spa after the award ceremony.

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Less ambitious can book packages such as "cross-country skiing, yoga & meditation" or individual ski safaris. But not all. There are not a few guests who categorically refuse to leave the "Waldhaus Sils" even for a few hours, too appealing is the hanging down and relaxing ([waldhaus-sils.ch](http://waldhaus-sils.ch)).

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## The "Sonnenalp Resort" in the Allgäu

Germany's largest hotel ski school is located at the foot of the slope on which the German racers will fight for world cup points again in the slalom and giant slalom in March 2020. On all days before and after, the 70 blue and red-dressed ski instructors of the "Sonnenalp Resort" reign above Ofterschwang.



The "Sonnenalp Resort" not only has a ski school, but also a large wellness park

Source: [guenterstandl.de](http://guenterstandl.de)

Already in the thirties, the "Sonnenalp" was the first hotel ever to offer winter sports care. Today, 100 years after the establishment of the first guest rooms, there is nothing the guests in the middle of the Allgäu Alps could not perfect: deep snow skiing, telemarking, snowboarding, freeriding, cross country skiing, snowshoeing – all on offer, on request with subsequent video analysis.

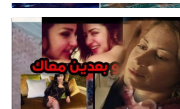
The regulars are now in the tens of thousands, almost incidentally asks the receptionist for children or grandchildren, we know each other, some for generations. Nevertheless, it is very discreet – sometimes the royal couple of Bhutan in one of the bright suites in modern country house style, and not even the local press gets it.



The suites of the "Sonnenalp Resort" are decorated in a modern country style

Source: [guenterstandl.de](http://guenterstandl.de)

By the way, there are no excuses for skiing: if you come without equipment, the well-equipped ski rental service will help you, the hotel bus will chauffeur you on the



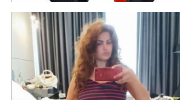
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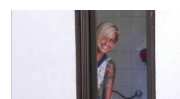
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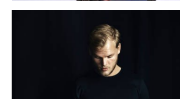
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slopes, the ski passes will also be organized by the hotel. You only have to ski yourself. And you have to weigh it up: the 16,000 square meter wellness park, like the ski school, is second to none ([sonnenalp.de](https://www.sonnenalp.de)).



## The "Vigilius Mountain Resort" in South Tyrol

To become a legend usually requires more than a 16-year history. However, the history of the "Vigilius Mountain Resort", opened in 2003, begins much earlier, in August 1912. At that time, a race for the world's first cable car for passenger transport was made, and the train to the mountain of Merano, the Vigiljoch, had it all in third place.



The slopes end right in front of the "Vigilius Mountain Resorts"

Source: Florian Andergassen

In the same year, the "Berghotel Vigiljoch", at almost 1,500 meters altitude, opened to the gaze of the general public. The entrepreneur Ulrich Ladurner, owner of the current resort, once wrote how, as a boy, he assumed that only philistines could spend the night up there. Before he fell in love with a waitress and then somehow still in the mountain hotel at the end of the gondola.

Later came the decay and Ladurners chance. In 2001 he stood in front of the empty hotel with the architect Matteo Thun, and they asked themselves: "All or nothing?" The answer: Everything. Only one barn stopped, today it houses the cozy restaurant "Stube Ida".



Minimalist but cozy: everything is new at "Vigilius Mountain Resort"

Source: Florian Andergassen

The rest gave way to a building of minimalist finesse that resembled a huge, fallen spruce trunk from high above and inside a fantasy of wood and natural stone. The first eco and climate certificates followed soon after the opening.

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And the (renewed) gondola still drives, the slopes still end at the front door, waitresses and waiters are still falling in love. Only with the philistines, Ulrich Ladurner sees it differently today. By the way, one of these was called Willy Brandt ([vigilius.it/de](https://www.vigilius.it/de); [designhotels.com](https://www.designhotels.com)).



## The hotel "Hirschen" in Vorarlberg

The Bregenzerwald in the far west of Austria is known for its special inns, but one is even more special: the "Hirschen" in Schwarzenberg. He is 264 years old, but anything but dusty.



The hotel "Hirschen" in Schwarzenberg is 264 years old

Source: [hirschenschwarzenberg.at](http://hirschenschwarzenberg.at)

The ceiling paintings, the creaking doors with their ancient fittings, the rustic furniture are in wonderful contrast to modern art, which is discreetly distributed throughout the hotel, the casual wine bar and the regular cultural and concert evenings, which can easily take on metropolitan Kleinkunstbühnen.

The motto "Young since 1755" is not a hollow advertising slogan, but is practiced by the hotel manager Peter Fetz, just under 30, every day. He took over the family business two years ago in the tenth generation. The balancing act between yesterday and today succeeds in the restaurant, where guests can choose between classic tavern cuisine and a regional avant-garde surprise menu, prepared by chef Jonathan Burger, also just under 30.



The balancing act between yesterday and today has succeeded in the hotel "Hirschen"

Source: [hirschenschwarzenberg.at](http://hirschenschwarzenberg.at)

Before eating, you can for example take a snowshoe hike or join a guided ski tour, after dinner we recommend a visit to the bar or in front of the fireplace, where the Austrian-dominated wine list guarantees no boredom ([hotel-hirschen-bregenzerwald.at](http://hotel-hirschen-bregenzerwald.at)).

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## The hotel "Chetzeron" in the Valais Alps

From the Matterhorn to Mont Blanc, the view is as spectacular as the architecture and history of the "Chetzeron" in the Swiss resort of Crans-Montana: the 2112-meter-high hotel was a gondola lift in its first life.



The "Chetzeron" in the Swiss resort of Crans-Montana is located at 2112 meters



altitude

Source: STUDIO 54

It was closed when a new lift went into operation nearby in 2001 – and reopened as a design hotel with only 16 rooms. Concrete, glass and wood dominate the straightforward interior, the panorama is unobstructable, the location unbeatable: Finally, the ski slope leads past the house, in the morning you can rush over the freshly groomed slopes in front of everyone else.

Even arrival and departure are unforgettable: Either you can be carved by Pistenbully to the most famous box seat in the Valais Alps, or you can take the lift and trudge a few minutes on foot through the snow ([chetzeron.ch/de](http://chetzeron.ch/de); [designhotels.com](http://designhotels.com)).

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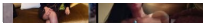
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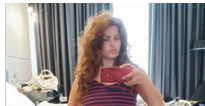
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