

Winter Expedition Trip Jan 20 -28, 2023 – Ischgl, Austria



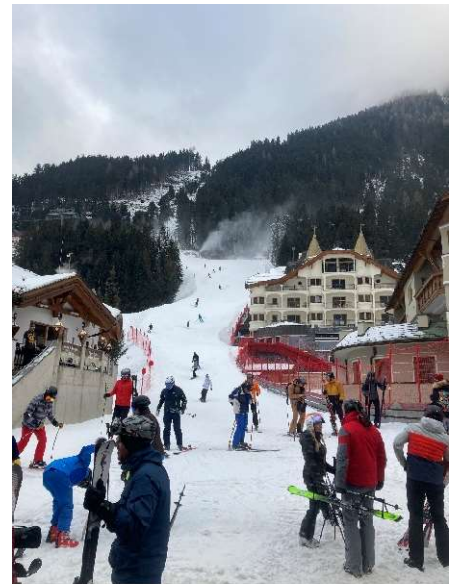
Ischgl (pronounced “Ish-gull”) is in the far southwestern corner of the Austrian Alps, on the border with Switzerland. The stunning scenery in every direction is always a major part of any vacation adventure to the Alps.



This trip started out as the TSC Winter Expedition trip, but after several clubs dropped out, it became a “Clubs trip”, with Clear Lake, Dallas, and Space City clubs participating. The tour operator was Winter Ski & Sports. A total of 56 people made the trip. The “Die Hard Three” – Dan Willett, Gayle Brown and Bob Williams – made up the CLASC contingent.

The flights into Munich and bus to the resort went according to schedule, and Clear Lake and Dallas unloaded at the Hotel Seiblishof. The Space City group was 2 doors down at the Schlosshof Hotel. Note – the “Ski in” run ended at the front door of their hotel. And the ski rental shop was directly across the street. And – you could buy your lift tickets at the Seiblishof front desk! That’s about as good as you can get at most any European resort.

It had been an unusually warm winter in western Europe, so some of the lower elevation resorts in the region were not even open. The week before we arrived it had finally ‘dumped’. Ischgl is high enough, and large enough to have sufficient snow-making equipment, that they were able to keep the slopes in better than average condition. However, that meant that lots of locals and tourists came to Ischgl to ski, so it stayed very busy all week.



A ‘short’ 10-minute walk in the morning through town got you to the main gondola station to get up onto the ski area. That was the only real lift line we saw all week. Lots of 6-pack and even two 8-pack lifts kept everything running smoothly.



Up and over the top took you to the Switzerland side, Samnaun, with a magnificent open bowl area.



Everything in the town of Ischgl was walking distance. (OK, so that includes some up and down.) There are beautiful old picturesque hotels and churches, with lots of good restaurants, shops, bars. We didn’t find many opportunities to eat out, other than lunch, since breakfast and dinner were included in the package at our hotel. Breakfast included made-to-order eggs, and dinners were a full 4-course meal. No one lost weight on this trip.



Wednesday, we did a day trip to St. Anton resort, just 1 hour by bus. More fabulous skiing, with perfectly groomed snow, and beautiful blue skies.



The sign let you know you were at the center of the Winter Universe. Where the 'Beautiful People' play.



The pedestrian-only section of town was filled with lovely hotels, restaurants, and, oh yeah, bars. Some did their best to get your attention.



The slogan for Ischgl is "Relax... if you can." That was hard to do. Though if you had a Glühwein with your buffalo mozzarella it was easier. 😊





We finally found the “IT” place to be for Apres ski. On the mountain. Hundreds of people jammed onto a plaza. DJ blaring a startling mix of rock and German oom-pah music. Beverages available. Good thing it was just a short run from there on down to town.

On that last day, when you notice that the clouds have moved in – not to the top of the hill, where it is still stunning, but to the valley, it’s time to decide to download the gondola.



Those who didn’t had slow going.



And then it’s time to pack up and head home. It was still a lovely view of town from our hotel.



Dan and I joined a dozen others for the post-trip extension to Zurich, Switzerland. This was not a skiing extension, just touring Zurich. We stayed at the Hotel Opera, just behind the Opera House, in the heart of old-town Zurich.

Our



Opera House



Sunday brunch on a lake tour boat was fabulous. Weather in town stayed just above freezing during the day, and there was very little snow in town.



We found some more great places to eat.

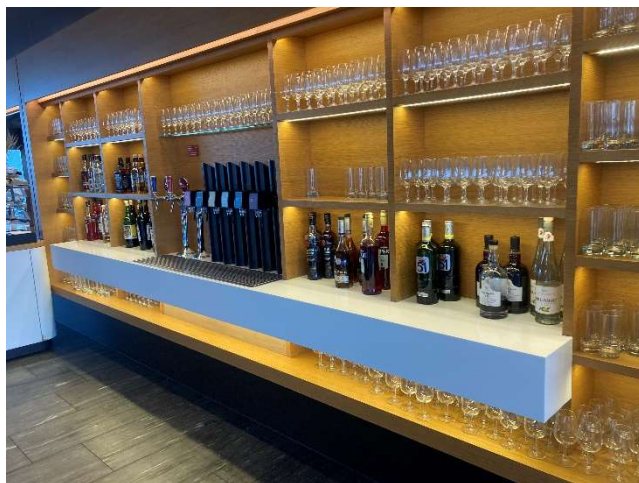


Dan and I took a short train ride to a tram station on the south side of the lake, then up to the crest of the hills overlooking Zurich. While it almost felt like early Spring in the valley, it was definitely still Winter at the top!



The views of the Lake Zurich and the city were fabulous!

Someone found a very clever use for their old hiking boots



Now it really was time to head home. I highly recommend the Lufthansa Club lounge at the Zurich airport. The beverage center is self-serve!! What a way to end a trip.

Trip Leader: Gayle Brown