

Hotels Plan A Cold Reception For Winter

Now the winter months are upon us, thoughts for many are turning to a ski holiday - and hotel accommodation with a difference at specially made ice hotels in Europe and North America.

And the European ski country of Andorra is hoping to attract tourists with a music festival and discounted offers for skiers - planning for example to offer free ski passes for children under 14 when a ski holiday package is booked through an English or Irish tour operator.

Andorra's resorts are also looking to broaden their market beyond skiing, snowboarding and other popular winter sports, with details available at the tourist office in the capital [Andorra la Vella](#) - in fact they are planning to build the Pyrenees' first every ice hotel. The Andorran ice hotel will be the most southerly seated ice hotel in the world.

Ice hotels are quite simply what their name implies - hotels carved out of ice. All ice hotels are rebuilt every year. The construction and operation are dependent on sub-zero temperatures. All walls, carvings, sculptures and furniture are made entirely out of ice. Furniture that requires assembly is held together using snice, a substance that takes the place of mortar in 'brick and mortar' buildings.

Ice Hotels in Norway

The Kirkenes Snow Hotel hosted its first full season three years ago during the 2006-2007 winter season. For the 2008-2009 winter season, the hotel had 21 rooms and is considered the largest snow dome in Norway. The latest facility for the the Kirkenes Snow Hotel is the Scandinavian Sauna by the lake.

The Ice Lodge is part of the Bjorligard Hotel in Norway. Due to its altitude of 1,250 meters above sea level, the Ice Lodge is enjoyed much longer into the winter season than other ice hotels. The lodge includes carved, spacious rooms with glistening ice surfaces and a bar. The Ice Bar is a great place to mingle with other Ice Lodge guests to enjoy a warming drink or two.

The Alta Igloo Hotel first came into existence in 2000. Located in the Finnmark region of Europe, it is the northernmost of all currently existing ice hotels. With 28 regular rooms and two suites, it is decorated with ice sculptures and furnishings. The hotel also has an ice chapel, gallery and bar where the drinks are served in ice glasses.

Ice Hotel in Sweden

The world's first ice hotel was created near Jukkasjarvi, Kiruna, Sweden. The idea to create ice hotels was actually almost accidental. One night, in 1990, French artist Jannot Derid held an art exhibition inside an igloo in Sweden. There were no hotel rooms available in the nearby town so some guests requested permission to sleep in the exhibition hall. The very first guests of the future Ice Hotel slept in sleeping bags on reindeer skin. The first major media attention may have been drawn to the hotel in the late 1990's when the rock group Van Halen recorded their video to the song 'Without You' in the newly built Ice Hotel.

Ice Hotel In Canada

The first Ice Hotel in North America was built in January 2000. The original was built in the Duchesnay resort area and had only 22 bedrooms. The latest versions have had more than 80 rooms. One thing that sets the Duchesnay Ice Hotel apart from others is its chapel where several weddings are celebrated each season.

Ice Hotels In Finland And Romania

Finland's Mammut Snow Hotel is not a true ice hotel - it's created entirely of snow. Most of Mammut Snow Hotel's furnishings, decorations and sculptures are created with ice. Similar ice decorations and sculptures are also on display in the Lainio Snow Hotel in Finland. The Mammut Snow Hotel is within the walls of the SnowCastle of Kemi, the biggest snow castle in the world. Also encased in the SnowCastle are The Castle Courtyard, The Snow Restaurant and a chapel for weddings.

Near Saariselka is the Hotel and Igloo Village Kakslauttanen. It is a small village of sorts created with snow igloos, glass igloos, an ice chapel, ice gallery and a restaurant made of snow. The impressive snow restaurant has seating to accommodate 150 people.

Balea Lake in the Fagaras Mountains of Romania is home to Eastern Europe's first ice hotel. The hotel was first created in 2006 and is at an altitude of 2034 metres above sea level. This ice hotel has accommodation for more than 150 guests and features attractions such as bobsledding and ice fishing.

Andorra to Offer More than Winter Sports

In addition to the inclusion of an ice hotel, Andorra's resorts have made more than 20 million euros worth of upgrades to existing ski holiday areas.

Improvements and additions include low cost helicopter sight seeing flights, tubing slopes, new ice rinks and a snowmobile circuit. For 2010 ski holidays, Andorra hopes to delight skiers looking for fun and excitement.

About the Author

2010 [Soldeu ski holiday](#) resources are at yourandorra.com including for those who want to book an [Andorra hotel](#)

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