

CMSC Hits the Slopes in Bad Gastein, Austria

By Randy Baustert, Trip Leader

A group of 45 CMSC club members flew Lufthansa to Munich and then bussed 3½ hours to Bad Gastein in late January, 2011.

We had icy slopes the first day, followed by four days of snow, which meant limited visibility, but lots of snow. The sixth day was sunny and beautiful.

Bad Gastein is only a small part of the Ski Amade ski pass but has plenty of skiing for a week without ever leaving the Gastein Valley. In six days we skied Graukogel, Sportgastein, Stubnerkogel to Bad Hofgastein and Dorfgastein to Grossarl—all in the Gastein Valley. One of our skiers used the bus and train system to venture out of the valley for a day of skiing in St Johann.

Our group did more side trips this year than I've ever seen on a Europe trip, I think because of the snowy days and limited visibility. Many went to Salzburg; many went there more than one day. They visited Salzburg's square and fortress, the cathedral and other sections of Old Town. Several did a return trip to Salzburg for Mozart's birthday, featuring a festival, musicians, his grave and house, and of course shopping.

Some did cross-country on Elizabeth promenade. Some hiked to Sportgastein on the Kaizer Wilhelm I promenade. Two made a day trip to Kitzbühel for sightseeing and shopping.



The Alps provided an ideal setting for January's European escapade.

We stayed in the Weismayr hotel in Bad Gastein, a beautiful old hotel built in 1832—good food, location near the casino and a new pool area. But the hotel could use some touchups.

After a week seven went home and 38 stayed for the Munich extension. In Munich we stayed in the King's Hotel Center, a three-star hotel. I'd recommend this hotel to anyone. It's an extra block to walk to the old section of town, but a great hotel for the price.

Many toured Dachau, the Neuschwanstein and Linderhof castles, and the old part of town with its churches, museums, Glockenspiel, Hofbrau Haus, the Residence and more shopping.

We ended the trip with a cancelled flight to O'Hare due to the blizzard in Chicago. This meant an extra day of sightseeing in Munich. We finally made our way home on SAS via Copenhagen. Many thanks to Lufthansa for helping us return home during such a bad storm.

Thanks to everyone who was on the trip. It's the people on the trip that make a good destination a great destination.



CMSC club members came away with warm memories of their Austrian adventure.

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