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All eyes on Austria's Arlberg ski region: new £40m lift system and extra flights from Heathrow put new ski in and out homes in the spotlight

Sporty Britons are falling for ski in and out flats in the pretty Alpine region of Arlberg. There's a new £40m lift system linking some world-famous ski resorts and extra flights.

CATHY HAWKER | Friday 2 December 2016 | [0 comments](#)





Joined-up thinking: the Arlberg gets a £40m lift system this week, and the road from peaceful Warth to glitzy Lech will be kept clear this winter

Alamy Stock Photo

Size matters to skiers – so it's all eyes on the Arlberg this winter. On Friday, a new lift system that cost £40 million opens in this western region of [Austria](#), linking some world-famous ski resorts and creating the country's largest integrated ski area.

Upmarket Lech will connect directly with après-ski hotspot St Anton, providing a thigh-burning 190 miles of runs.

And there is more good news for the Arlberg. It is less than two hours from Innsbruck and on Sunday, British Airways starts four weekly flights from Heathrow to Innsbruck airport, joining the existing service the airline runs from Gatwick.

The Arlberg is one of the prettiest Alpine regions, with low-level villages that are charmingly Austrian, right down to their slender church steeples.

Best of all, the snowfall is legendary. The quiet village of Warth on the edge of the Tyrol is officially the snowiest village in the whole of the Alps with an average annual fall of 11 metres.

So all in all, picture perfect and snow sure with a modern linked infrastructure, the Arlberg is this winter's winner.

FLATS WITH A SPA LIFESTYLE



From £331,700: ski in and out homes at Apart-Hotel PURE Warth include reception, restaurant, bar and generous spa

Warth is only three miles by road from high-gloss Lech. However, that road has been impassable in winter, keeping Warth in something of a time warp. Compared to chic Lech, it is known for being a peaceful, intimate glitz-free zone.

Now, though, things are changing. In 2013 a ski lift joined the two villages, opening Warth to the Arlberg ski area and this winter for the first time local authorities plan to keep the road between the

two villages open, saving a two-and-half-hour road trip around the mountain.

Little Warth, with new-build homes from £331,700, offers undeniable value compared with Lech where two-bedroom flats easily cost more than £1,725,000.



The lively Austrian ski resort offering apartments from £162,000

Dutch developer Mountain Residences is selling ski in and out homes off-plan at **Apartment-Hotel PURE Warth**. The 29 one- to five-bedroom homes of 538 to 2,690sq ft will be in three buildings at the highest point of Warth and run as a hotel.

Facilities include reception, restaurant, bar and generous spa, sauna and infinity outdoor swimming pool, all with wide mountain views. The village shops and restaurants are an easy walk away.

“Ski in and out in Austria is rare and there is little development in the Arlberg,” says Mark Smits of Mountain Residences. “This development is ski in and out in a resort with the best snow record and those facts, along with solid rental returns, are top of our buyers’ wish lists.”

UNSPOILT ALPINE CHARM



From £449,000: apartments with one to five bedrooms at Alpine Spa Residences in Warth. Through Alpine Marketing

Smits and his partner Marc de Vocht have completed five successful projects in Austria. They use local products, wood and stone, in a contemporary design to provide hugely comfortable and stylish homes with extensive wellness centres and then operate the developments as boutique hotels, achieving rental returns of between five and six per cent on equity.

Owners can use their homes for six weeks each year, otherwise making them available to rent. Prices range from £331,700 to £1,895,000 through property agents [Cluttons](#), with annual service charges from £2,000.

Completion is planned for spring 2018 and 11 of the 29 homes are sold to buyers from Holland, Germany and the UK.

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“Austria is certainly in demand,” confirms Joanna Leggett of Cluttons. “It provides value, build quality is excellent and its resorts are prettier than purpose-built concrete ones.”

[Alpine Marketing](#) has two projects in Warth. **Secret Mountain Lodge** offers fully furnished one- to three-bedroom apartments with a spa and restaurant priced from £545,700, while one- to five-bedroom apartments due for completion next year at **Alpine Spa Residences** start from £449,000.

“Warth is a basin circled by high mountains, totally unspoilt and beautiful,” says Jessica Delaney of Alpine Marketing. “It was only joined to Lech by lift three years ago and now the winter road access is a further game changer.”

Also with good mountain views and due for completion next spring, **Lux-Alp** has 13 one- to four-bedroom apartments priced from £545,500, fully furnished and available through [Savills Alpine Homes](#). Underground parking is £21,500 and the homes will be managed and rented by the family-run Lechtalerhof Hotel in the village. ■

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