

There is another ski field just a quick bus ride away, near the neighbouring village of Kaprun. It's a glacier ski area on the Kitzsteinhorn mountain. It's also a major tourist destination for non-skiers wanting to get a good taste of the mountains, with scenic gondola rides to 3029m at the top of the Kitzsteinhorn. We had been saving this adventure for a sunny day and that was the forecast for today. Our weather surprise this morning was not blue skies, but frozen fog. The mountain webcams showed beautiful weather though, so we were on our way,

The journey to the top of the Kitzsteinhorn involves two gondolas and a cable car. The kids left their skis at the top of the second gondola as there was no ski run from the very top. The cable car to the summit was the most impressive with two huge spans way up high. Definitely not a ride for people scared of heights!



One of the gondolas



Cable car to the top

The views from the top were amazing, with mountains as far as you could see. The kids headed back down for their day of skiing and we grabbed an early lunch to soak up the beautiful views for a while longer.





Just a few mountains



Lunch views

After descending the mountain, our next stop was the Tauern Spa. It was lovely to spend a few hours soaking in the various pools. Austrian spa temperatures are never that hot, but it works really well. Even the outside pools were only 36 degrees but strangely it was warm enough, even surrounded by snow. Lying in the pool looking up at the mountains was the ultimate in relaxation.



Tauern Spa inside





And outside

We had a bit of time after we got back to Zell, so wandered the town and found a Konditorei for afternoon tea. Our snacks were definitely empty calories, but they were so good! The kids showed up late afternoon, they'd had a great day skiing on the glacier. The skiing there felt more like NZ without the trees. Our snowy days have been beautiful, but it was lovely to enjoy blue skies and sunshine today.



Chocolate, pastry and meringue - yum!



Local church

I thought about cooking tonight, but not for too long! Our days are so busy that there's not much spare time and the kitchen in our apartment isn't that well equipped. We also have a great choice of wonderful restaurants right on our doorstep that need to be checked out. We went back to Restaurant Lebzelter that Andy and I had lunched at a few days ago. The food was delicious and we loved the Austrian vibe - all of the staff were dressed in traditional dirndl and lederhosen.

There was some free entertainment on in Zell tonight, the weekly "Snownight". This was a sound, light and laser show, with skiing stuff thrown in. The show was held at the bottom of the CityXpress slope, so right by our apartment. We were entertained with ski acrobatics, formation skiers and parachute skiers. It was a fantastic show and a great finish to an amazing day. These are the things that make a winter week in Europe so special. It's not all about the skiing, it's all the other experiences as well that make it so magic.





Snownight