

NEW STRATEGY TO LURE TOURISTS BACK TO SLOVAKIAN SKI RESORTS



The adoption of Euro in 2009 in Slovakia together with high prices led to decreasing numbers of visitors in local ski resorts last year. This year to fight the negative development Slovakian resorts started to cooperate and offer discounts.

Last winter, Slovakia ski resorts experienced a poor tourism season. After the country adopted Euro on 1st January, 2009, the most attractive region for skiers - Tatra Mountains - welcomed thirty percent less visitors. There were several reasons for last year's poor winter season. High prices of ski passes, expensive accommodation, low quality services and the exchange rate were the major ones.

Considerable part of the clientele was lured to the Alpine countries offering a range of discount packages. This year, Slovakian resorts decided rather to cooperate and offer common discounts than to lead price wars against each other, reported daily Idnes.cz.

The first sign of the changing Slovakian strategy is the new collaboration project between three popular ski resorts of Velka Raca, Strbske Pleso and Donovaly. This year they started to provide interesting discount packages and also offer a common transferable ski pass. A ten-day ski pass for € 18 per day thus allows the skiers to enjoy in total 32 kilometers of slopes. Overall, the prices for ski passes decreased on average by 15 per cent compared to the last year. Similarly, accommodation prices declined roughly by 15-30 per cent this year.

In previous years, Velka Raca resort in Kysucke Beskydy was popular mainly among the Poles and Czechs thanks to the short traveling distance. Nevertheless, tourists from these two countries were then put off by the exchange rate of Euro thus they are likely to use the discount packages offered for 2010 the most. There are 13 ski slopes representing 12,360 meters, three funiculars and three ski lifts in Raca. There are also decent snowboard slopes as well as a bobsled run. Visitors can stay in nearby town Oscadnica in a new modern three-star hotel, whose construction was partially sponsored from EU subsidies.

Donovaly is a ski resort on the southern side of the Low Tatras (Nizke Tatry) with 17 ski slopes of 11,120 meters. There are two funiculars and fourteen ski lifts. Skiers may also enjoy 25 km of cross-country skiing trails. **Strbske Pleso on the other hand is one of the most famous Slovakian tourism resorts in Tatra Mountains.** Visitors may stay e.g. at the five-star Kempinski hotel although its high quality services naturally correspond with the high prices.

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