

SWISS TOURISM AWAITS SUCCESSFUL WINTER SEASON



Swiss Tourism is getting ready for the upcoming winter season with positive outlook. After considerable slump in overnight stay figures in the past years, slight increase is likely to be recorded this year.

According to Swiss Tourism the **visitors should feel the difference this year thanks to considerable investments in the tourism sector.** The tourist board referred to new hotels in Andermatt, Davos, Lenzerheide, Nendaz, Saanen, Verbier, Affoltem at Albis and Basel. New mountain railways have been launched in Blatten-Belalp, Meiringen-Hasliberg, Nendaz and Zermatt. New connections were built among the ski areas Arosa-Lenzerheide, Zinal-Grimenz and Bruson-Le Châble (connection to Verbier).

With respect to hotel overnight stays, the Cycle Research Institute announced that for the period between November 2013 and April 2014 they expect an increase of 2.9% in comparison to the previous season.

To raise interest in the winter season, 550 ski instructors have traveled to Zurich, Bern and Lausanne promoting the ski resorts to the locals. **Swiss Tourism has a 16.9 million Francs marketing budget for the winter season of 2013/14.** Besides domestic travelers, the focus of promotion is on Germany, France, Italy, the Netherlands, Belgium, the UK, North America and Russia. No less than 23 media conferences will be organized.

The tourist board however is also focusing on Asian markets. As a part of the marketing campaign eight Chinese ski instructors came to Switzerland for four month training. The aim is to identify possible problems Chinese guests may encounter in the country and to increase the understanding of the Asian visitors. After the training the instructors will promote the Swiss regions in China. Currently, only 100,000 hotel guests in Switzerland are Chinese.

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