

HALF OF AUSTRIAN WINTER SPORT EQUIPMENT IS RENTED



The winter season is approaching and snow enthusiasts are already looking forward to the slopes. Obviously without skis, snowboards and helmets none of it is possible. In Austria, around half of winter sport equipment used by skiers is reportedly rented.

In Austria, there are about 1,250 commercial ski rental companies. Around half of the skis, snowboards and other equipment used by the winter resort visitors is simply borrowed in one of these businesses.

The growing trend to borrow the sport equipment reflects the desire to be more flexible, to have more options, to try new things, according to experts. For example, a snowboarder would like to use two boards for a day. Tobogganing also seems to come back in popularity.

The main target group are tourists who stay on vacation for a week. However, even experienced skiers borrow, test and “later, maybe buy a model”. Most shops have the latest and highest quality winter sport equipment available. Most people ride on medium class skis, but there are no more bad skis.

Many book their winter vacation together with the sport equipment. Some travel agencies offer corresponding packages. This is particularly popular among British travelers who often prefer the complete package.

It is also possible to book skis online in advance. Sports distributors as Sport2000 or Intersport operate their booking platforms. The biggest independent booking platform for online ski rental in Europe is Alpinresorts.com

Last year 50,000 skiers booked their sport equipment or online ski lessons on the platform. Across Europe the company has 200,000 customers per winter season. 300 stores and 60 ski schools are under contract.

“Most people book one to three weeks in advance,” Gunther Dillersberger, one of the founders of Alpinresorts.com, said. Customers thereby save between ten and sixty percent, depending on the country. The cooperation also provides the shop with publicity. **“We can provide the shops and sellers with marketing and publicity which they themselves cannot afford,”** explained Dillersberger.

In addition, shops have less work to do. “We save our ski rental and school partners a lot of work with our multi-lingual support hotline for their customers.” Also, all booking data is fed into its system. Thus, the rental shops have more time for their customers on site.

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