

Swiss Slow Down Extreme Skiers

Recent reports in the UK press on Swiss plans to enforce speed limits on ski slopes are inaccurate. Yes, they're planning a voluntary program to get skiers to slow down. No, they will not perform clandestine operations to trap speeders and fine them. That means no radar, police, cameras or fines.

The government-controlled Swiss Accident Insurance (SUVA) wants skiers to take responsibility for their actions. They prefer self-control to be the order of the day on the slopes. They also prefer that common sense need not be legislated. Their initiative's aim is to educate skiers on the dangers of excessive speed on crowded slopes.

Winter ski vacations are increasingly popular in this land of natural, unadorned beauty. This rise in ski holiday tourism presents a continuing problem though. Resorts with no room for expansion find themselves with more skiers trying to manoeuvre down their slopes. Limited space with more speeding skiers equals increased accidents.

Suva's "Check the Risk" program is an innovative remedy to this concern. As a provider of compulsory coverage, they see the need to prevent injuries and fatalities. Along with the human cost are the financial cost and the reputation of Switzerland as a safe skiing destination.

Their campaign involves their employees situating themselves on a marked ski or snowboard run. As skiers and snowboarders approach the area, they ask them if they want their speed clocked. They can perform an emergency stop procedure when they reach the bottom of their run if they want. The voluntary participants then try to guess their speed. A measurement of their stopping distance results from the whole scenario as well.

This program gives skiers and snowboarders an indication of how speed is deceiving. Many skiers go with the flow, not realizing the risk injury to themselves and others when they push the limit. The whole program is about awareness and keeping skiing exhilarating and accident-free.

Switzerland's ski resorts accommodate skiers of all levels. It's an industry vital to the nation's economy. Every year winter sports enthusiasts from all over the world descend on this country because of the wide array of slopes to choose from. The British skier especially likes the Swiss ski holiday facilities, and are catered for by specialist ski companies like [Thomson Ski](#)

Two popular regions are the Davos and Zermatt resort areas. Davos contains five ski regions: Jakobshorn, Parsenn, Pisch, Madrisa and Rinerhorn.

Jakobshorn, known for hosting many international events, offers quaint ski huts for skiers. Parsenn, the largest of the five regions in Davos offers the longest downhill ski run. At 12 kilometers long, it lures many thrill seekers its way.

Pischa and Rinerhorn are splendid areas for family skiing. Klosters, linked to the Davos network, shares the Parsenn ski field with Davos, and Madrisa is its own specific area. Klosters, well known as a destination of Prince Charles and his sons on their yearly ski vacations is breathtaking. It sits at 1200 meters above sea level and offers a panoramic view of the surrounding area.

Zermatt, towered over majestically by the Matterhorn, is vacation central for skiers and climbers alike. It boasts the Klein Matterhorn, the highest ski lift in Europe. This area has nine of the 10 highest mountains in Europe and the longest winter skiing season. All of this in what is still a mountain village that's car-free and great for walking around.

The ski area - the Matterhorn Ski Paradise has 313 kilometers of marked pistes or runs. They run the gauntlet from easy, intermediate, to steep, as well as "free ride" or unprepared. You can enjoy the alpine view of the glacier fields on a Zermatt area vacation as an added bonus, another reason for skiers to slow down.

A reasoned approach to this wonderful winter sport ensures a safe, exciting experience. With all the benefits a ski vacation in this country has to offer, common sense dictates slowing down just a touch.

About the Author

Information about skiing in Switzerland and other countries is available at yourandorra.com with [ski Andorra](#) companies already looking to the 2009 season.

Details include a map, Andorra weather forecast and an [Andorra snow report](#)