

Davos

Canton of the Grisons · Switzerland

TRAVEL GUIDE

Tripomatic



Overview

Davos sits at about 1,560 meters above sea level in a long alpine valley in eastern Switzerland, and is often called the highest town in the Alps. The town is really two linked settlements, Davos Platz and Davos Dorf, strung along several kilometers of the same valley floor and connected by a single main street.

For most of the 20th century, Davos was known as a health resort: its dry mountain air drew patients to a string of sanatoriums, an era that inspired *Thomas Mann's* novel "The Magic Mountain". Today it is one of the largest ski areas in Switzerland, ringed by five separate mountains, and a year-round base for hiking and mountain sports. The painter *Ernst Ludwig Kirchner* lived and worked here for two decades, and each January the town becomes the temporary home of the World Economic Forum's annual meeting.

When to visit

Winter (December to March) is cold and snowy, with reliable snow for skiing well into spring. Summer (June to September) is mild and is the best season for hiking, with warm days and cool nights. Spring and late autumn are quiet shoulder seasons, with many mountain lifts closed for maintenance.

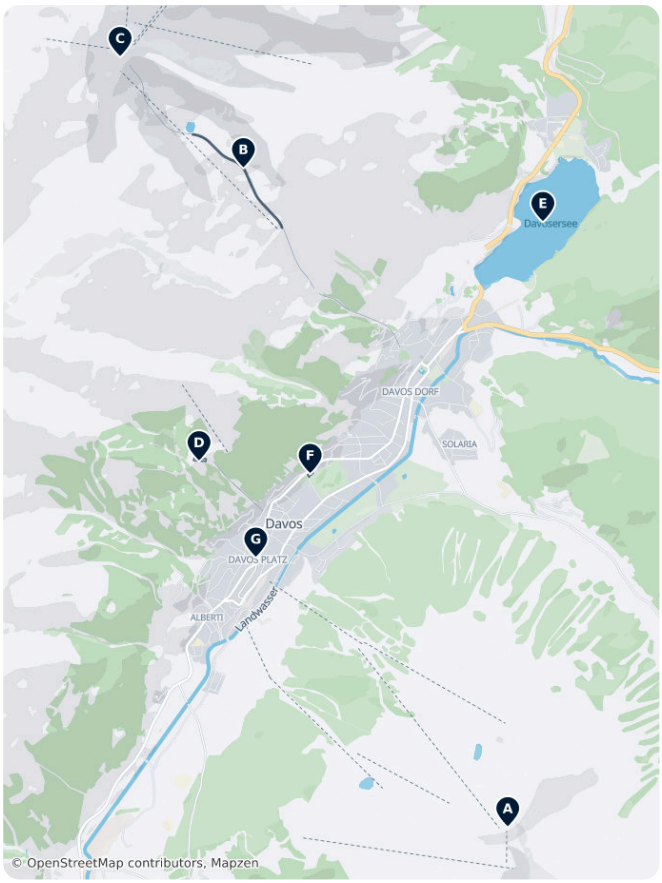
The town's biggest annual event is the **World Economic Forum's** annual meeting each January, when world leaders and business figures gather in Davos for a week. It is not a public event, but it fills the town's hotels, raises prices sharply, and brings tight security and road closures — worth knowing when planning a January trip, whether to join the buzz or avoid it.

MONTH	CONDITIONS	DAY °C avg / max	NIGHT °C avg / min	
January	Great Great for skiing	-2° / 4° Feels like -6°	-10° / -18°	14 rainy days · Dry air · Calm winds
February	Great Great for skiing	-1° / 4° Feels like -5°	-10° / -19°	12 rainy days · Dry air · Calm winds
March	Good Good for skiing	2° / 7° Feels like -2°	-7° / -15°	15 rainy days · Dry air · Calm winds
April	Fair Fair for skiing	7° / 16° Feels like 4°	-2° / -10°	16 rainy days · Dry air · Calm winds
May	Poor Poor for hiking	13° / 20°	3° / -2°	21 rainy days · Dry air · Calm winds
June	Fair Fair for sightseeing	18° / 24°	7° / 2°	21 rainy days · Dry air · Calm winds
July	Good Good for sightseeing	19° / 24°	9° / 3°	21 rainy days · Dry air · Calm winds
August	Good Good for sightseeing	19° / 25°	9° / 4°	20 rainy days · Dry air · Calm winds
September	Fair Fair for hiking	15° / 21°	5° / -1°	16 rainy days · Dry air · Calm winds
October	Fair Fair for hiking	11° / 18°	2° / -5°	14 rainy days · Dry air · Calm winds
November	Good Good for skiing	4° / 12° Feels like 0°	-4° / -13°	15 rainy days · Dry air · Calm winds
December	Great Great for skiing	0° / 5° Feels like -4°	-9° / -19°	15 rainy days · Dry air · Calm winds

Climate data: NASA POWER (MERRA-2) · 1996–2025

Winters are long and genuinely cold, with sub-zero nights common from November through March.

Top sights



- A Jakobshorn is one of Davos's five ski mountains and a year-round destination, reached by cable car from Davos Platz; it draws snowboarders and freestylers in winter and hikers in summer.
- The B Parsennbahn is a historic two-section funicular, running since 1931, that climbs to C Weissfluhjoch, the high mountain saddle at the heart of the Parsenn ski and hiking area, with wide views over the Grisons Alps.
- D Berghotel Schatzalp is a grand Art Nouveau building from 1900, originally a tuberculosis sanatorium and one of the settings that inspired Thomas Mann's "The Magic Mountain"; it is now a hotel with a botanical alpine garden on its terrace.
- E Davosersee is a small natural lake on the edge of town, popular for a lakeside walk in summer and for skating and cross-country skiing once it freezes over in winter.
- F Kirchner Museum is dedicated to the German Expressionist painter Ernst Ludwig Kirchner, who settled in Davos in 1917 and lived there until his death in 1938, painting many of his best-known works here.
- G Wintersport-Museum Davos traces the history of skiing, sledging and bobsledding in the resort, a good stop for understanding why this valley became a winter sports pioneer.

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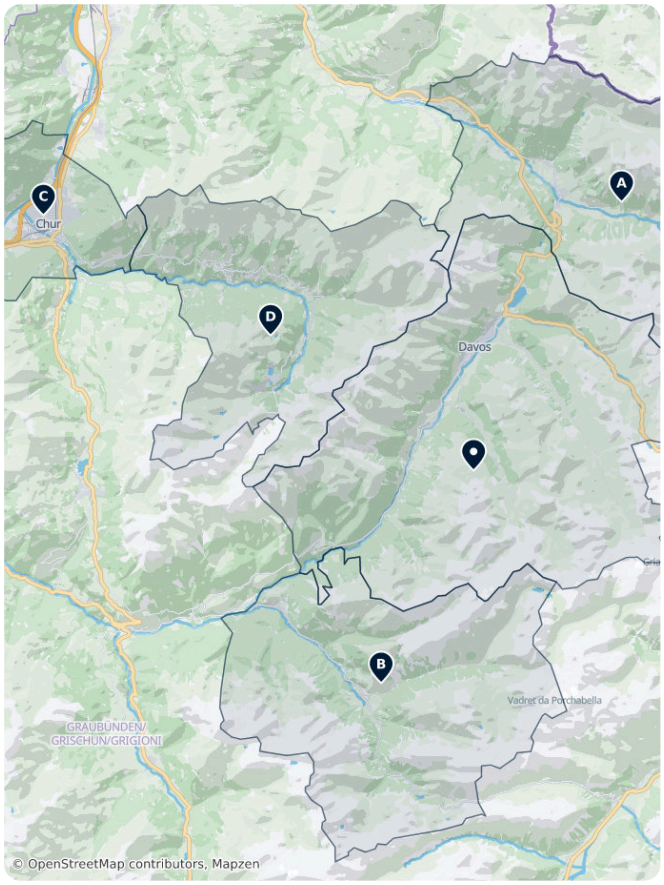
What to experience

- Skate or cross-country ski on frozen Davosersee in winter — Davos's natural ice rink is often described as one of the largest in Europe, and the valley has an extensive network of groomed cross-country trails.
- Watch a game at the **Spengler Cup**, an international ice hockey tournament held at Vaillant Arena every year between Christmas and New Year — one of the oldest club tournaments of its kind.
- Ride the night toboggan run from Berghotel Schatzalp down to the valley, a floodlit sled run that is a local winter tradition.
- Head for the quieter slopes of Pischa or Rinerhorn for freeride skiing and ski touring away from the busier Parsenn and Jakobshorn lift lines.
- In summer, hike into a side valley such as Sertigtal for alpine meadows and mountain huts well outside the main resort bustle.

Day trips

Davos sits inside a valley network that makes for easy day trips by train, from a neighboring resort town to a UNESCO World Heritage rail line.



- A Klosters — about 10 to 15 minutes by train. Davos's quieter twin resort, sharing the same Parsenn/Gotschna ski and hiking area, with a more traditional village feel.
- B Bergün Filisur — under an hour by train. The Rhaetian Railway's Albula line, a UNESCO World Heritage route, runs through here and crosses the dramatic Zügenschlucht en route; the Landwasser Viaduct, one of the line's most photographed structures, is a short walk from Filisur station.
- C Chur — just over an hour by train. Switzerland's oldest town and the capital of the Grisons canton, with a compact medieval old town and cathedral.
- D Arosa — about 2 hours by train via Chur, or a scenic summer drive over the Strela Pass. Another high-altitude resort, with its own lake and ski area, worth the longer trip for the pass road alone.

Where to explore

Davos shares its valley and its lift network with one neighbor, and sits within easy reach of the Grisons canton's other resort towns.

- Klosters is linked to Davos by the shared Parsenn-Gotschna ski area and the same rail line — many visitors split a stay between the two.
- Chur, the cantonal capital, and Arosa, another high alpine resort, both lie within the same Rhaetian Railway network.
- Bergün Filisur anchors the UNESCO-listed section of the railway on the way toward St. Moritz.

Getting there

- **By air**: Zurich Airport is the main gateway, about 2.5 hours away by train with one change (usually at Landquart). Basel and Zurich's other regional airports are further and less practical.
- **By train**: Davos is served directly by the Rhaetian Railway, with regular trains from Landquart (on the Zurich-Chur main line) to Davos Platz and Davos Dorf. A separate line connects from Klosters, useful for travelers arriving via the Vereina car-transport tunnel from the Engadin or Austria.
- **By bus**: PostBus coaches connect Davos with smaller villages in side valleys not served by rail, including Sertig and Dischma.

Getting around

- **Public transit**: A local bus network (Davos Bus) links Davos Platz, Davos Dorf and the outlying valleys. Tickets can be bought by contactless card or phone directly on board; guests staying overnight usually receive a guest card that includes free local bus travel. Rhaetian Railway
- **Taxi**: Taxis are available but not usually needed within town given the bus network.
- **On foot / cycling**: The valley floor is walkable but stretched out — Davos Platz and Davos Dorf are about a 30-minute walk apart. Cycling is practical on the valley's dedicated paths, less so on the steep side roads.

Getting around on foot & by bike

WALKABILITY

Moderate

Davos Platz and Davos Dorf are each walkable in themselves, but the two centres sit about 30 minutes' walk apart along the valley floor, so most visitors use the local bus to cover longer distances.

CYCLING INFRASTRUCTURE

Moderate

Dedicated paths run along the valley floor, but the surrounding terrain is steep, so cycling beyond the valley floor means serious climbs.

Driving

- **Is a car worth it?**: Not needed for a stay centered on Davos itself — trains and local buses cover the town and main lift stations well. A car helps for reaching side valleys like Sertig and Dischma, or for driving the Flüela Pass and Strela Pass roads.
- **Parking**: Multi-storey car parks serve both Davos Platz and Davos Dorf; street parking in the centre is metered. Guest cards from local accommodation often include parking discounts.
- **Restrictions**: Some high mountain pass roads, including the Flüela Pass, close completely in winter — check conditions before planning a route over them.

Food & drink

Davos sits in the Grisons canton, and its menus lean on hearty mountain cooking: look for *capuns* (chard-wrapped dumplings), *Bündner Gerstensuppe* (barley soup with dried meat), and air-dried *Bündnerfleisch*.

For eating out, the Promenade and the streets around it in Davos Platz hold the town's main cluster of restaurants and cafés, ranging from casual mountain-hut style fare to more formal dining rooms in the larger hotels.

What to eat & drink

BREAKFAST

Birchermüesli
A raw-oat, fruit, and yogurt breakfast invented by a Zurich doctor around 1900, now standard on breakfast buffets.

LUNCH

Rösti
A fried, shredded-potato cake, originally a Bernese farmer's breakfast, now a national side dish.

DINNER

Cheese Fondue · Fondue
Melted Gruyère and Vacherin cheese in a shared pot, eaten by dipping bread cubes on long forks.

Raclette
Cheese melted tableside or under a grill and scraped over boiled potatoes, pickles, and onions.

Zürcher Geschnetzeltes
Sliced veal and mushrooms in a creamy white-wine sauce, traditionally served with rösti.

Älplermagronen
Alpine herder's macaroni gratin with potatoes, cheese, and cream, often topped with fried onions and served with apple sauce.

SNACKS & STREET FOOD

Cervelat
Switzerland's best-known sausage, usually grilled and often called the country's unofficial national dish.

SWEETS & DESSERTS

Swiss Chocolate · Schweizer Schokolade
Switzerland pioneered milk chocolate in the 19th century; look for small-batch chocolatiers alongside the big national brands.

Basler Läckerli
A dense, spiced honey-and-candied-fruit biscuit from Basel, traditional around Christmas.

DRINKS

Swiss Wine · Vin Suisse
Mostly consumed domestically rather than exported; Valais and Vaud, along Lake Geneva, produce the best-known Chasselas whites.

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Safety & health

Davos is a safe destination with very little crime affecting visitors beyond ordinary care with belongings in busy areas like the train station. The main practical concern is altitude: at over 1,500 meters, some visitors feel mild effects such as shortness of breath or poor sleep for the first day or two, especially with strenuous activity on the higher peaks.

Mountain weather changes quickly, so hikers and skiers should check forecasts and avalanche bulletins before heading off marked trails or pistes.

History

Davos grew from a farming settlement into a health resort in the second half of the 19th century, when doctors began sending patients with tuberculosis and other respiratory illnesses to its dry, high-altitude air. Grand sanatoriums went up across the hillside, including Berghotel Schatzalp, and the town's atmosphere during this era became the backdrop for *Thomas Mann's* 1924 novel "The Magic Mountain".

The painter *Ernst Ludwig Kirchner* arrived in 1917 to recover his health and stayed until his death in 1938, producing much of his later work in the surrounding mountains; Kirchner Museum now holds the largest collection of his paintings. In 1971, the economist Klaus Schwab founded what became the World Economic Forum, choosing Davos for its annual meeting — a gathering that has met here every January since and given the town a second identity as a meeting place for global leaders.

Country facts

Quick practical facts for Switzerland at a glance:

CURRENCY
CHF CHF

EMERGENCY
112

ELECTRICITY



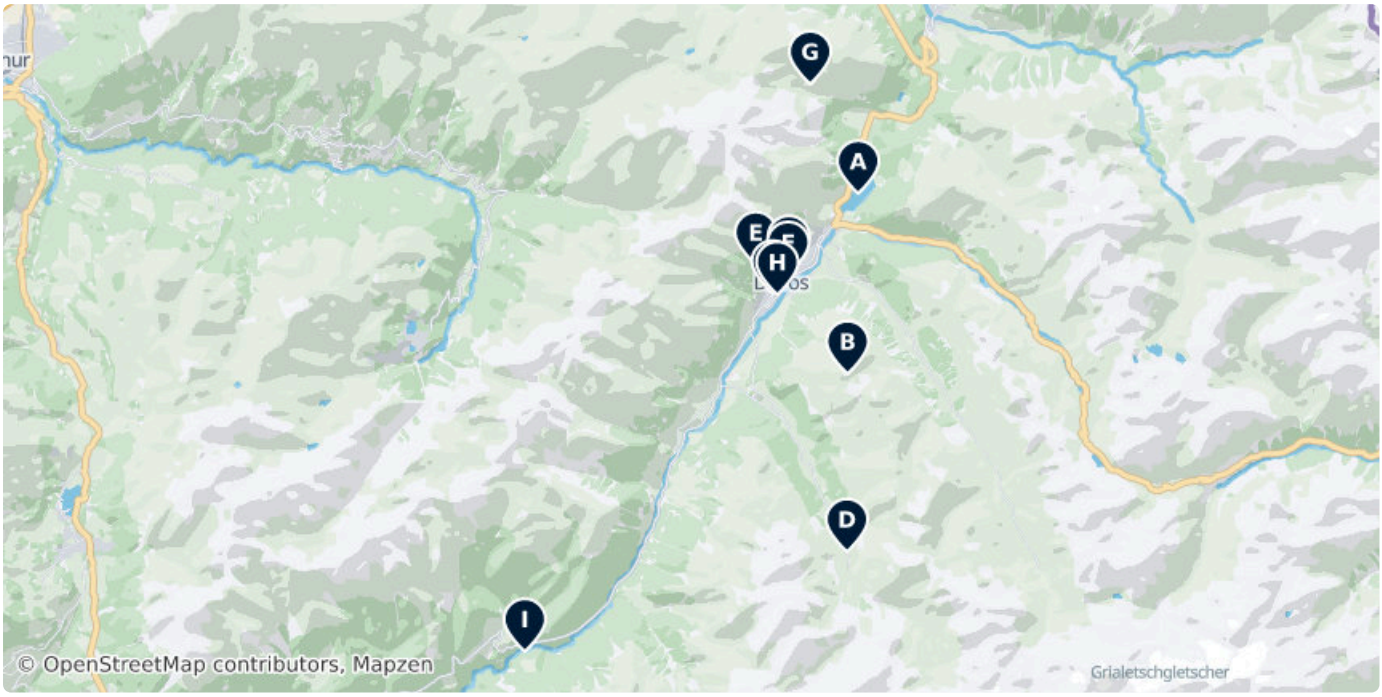
Type C / Type J
230 V · 50 Hz

LANGUAGES
German, French, Italian, Romansh

TAP WATER
Safe to drink

Davos Essentials

Davos combines high-altitude Alpine scenery with significant cultural landmarks. This selection features the 13th-century St. Johann Church and the Kirchner Museum, dedicated to Expressionist artist Ernst Ludwig Kirchner. Natural highlights include the 54-meter-deep Lake Davos and the glacial Sertig Valley. The town's heritage as a winter sports pioneer is preserved in the Winter Sports Museum and the Vaillant Arena, home to HC Davos. High-altitude destinations like the Jakobshorn and the historic Berghotel Schatzalp, which inspired Thomas Mann's literature, offer views across the Albula Alps.





Ⓐ Lake Davos

Lake Davos is a small natural lake at Davos, Switzerland. Its surface area is 0.59 km² and the maximum depth is 54 m.

7260, Switzerland (46.81989, 9.85336)



Ⓑ Jakobshorn

The Jakobshorn is a mountain of the Albula Alps, overlooking Davos in the Swiss canton of Graubünden.

7270, Switzerland (46.77240, 9.84934)



C Kirchner Museum Davos

The Kirchner Museum Davos is an art museum dedicated to the life and work of the German Expressionist artist Ernst Ludwig Kirchner, located...

Promenade 82, 7270 Davos Platz, CH (46.80012, 9.82672)

Tu–Su 10:00–18:00

kirchnermuseum.ch, +41 81 410 63 00



D Sertig Valley

The Sertig Valley is located in the municipality of Davos, south of the town, in the Swiss canton of Graubünden.

45 Sertigerstrasse, Sertig Dörfli 7272, Switzerland (46.72550, 9.84908)

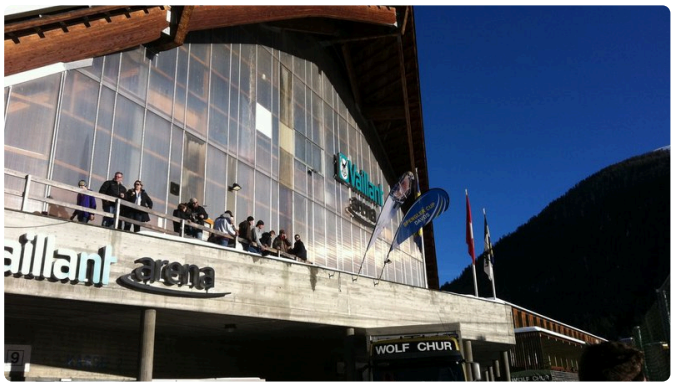


E Mountain Hotel Schatzalp

Originally opened as a luxury sanatorium in 1900, this Art Nouveau hotel sits 1,861 meters above sea level. It served as the inspiration for Thomas Mann's novel "The Magic Mountain" and is accessible via a private funicular from Davos Platz.

23 Bobbahnstrasse, Schatzalp 7270, Switzerland (46.80112, 9.81399)

schatzalp.ch, +41814155151



F Vaillant Arena

Eisstadion Davos is an indoor arena in Davos, Switzerland. It is primarily used for ice hockey and is the home arena of HC Davos.

Talstrasse 41, 7270 Davos Platz, Switzerland (46.79851, 9.82642)

hcd.ch/Vaillant-Arena.313.0.html, +41 81 415 36 00



G Davos Klosters

Parsenn is a ski area near Davos, Switzerland, offering 35 ski runs.

7260, Switzerland (46.84870, 9.83490)

davos.ch/en/



H St. Johann Church

Dating back to the 13th century, this church is one of the dominants of the Davos skyline. Its capacity is 800 people.

8 Berglistutz, Davos 7270, Switzerland (46.79326, 9.82227)

+41 81 413 53 42



I Zügen Gorge

Around three kilometres long, this stunning gorge is an ideal place for a hike. You can read information about the area on the panels.

7494, Switzerland (46.69918, 9.72510)



J Winter Sports Museum

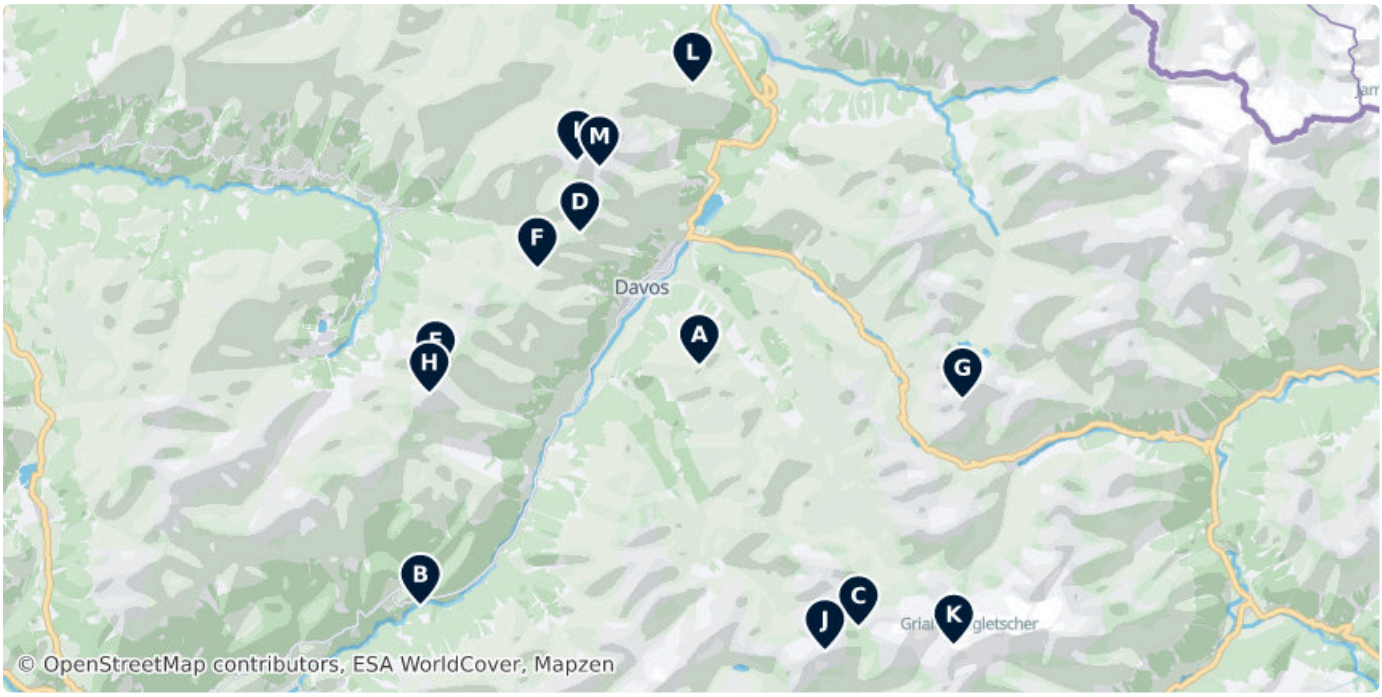
Learn about the history of winter sports at this fascinating museum. Discover how sledging, skiing or bobsledding were like in the past!

Promenade 43, 7270 Davos Platz, CH (46.79356, 9.82049)

wintersportmuseum.ch, +41 81 413 24 84

Mountains and Peaks

Davos is surrounded by the high-altitude terrain of the Albula and Plessur Alps. This collection highlights the region's geographical diversity, from the 3,229-meter peak of Piz Vadret to the dramatic rock formations of the Zügen Gorge. The list includes historic transit routes like the Scaletta Pass, once a vital trade link, and modern hubs like Jakobshorn and Weissfluhjoch. These summits and mountain passes offer a network of trails connecting Davos to neighboring valleys such as Arosa and the Schanfigg region.





A Jakobshorn

The Jakobshorn is a mountain of the Albula Alps, overlooking Davos in the Swiss canton of Graubünden.

7270, Switzerland (46.77240, 9.84934)



B Zügen Gorge

Around three kilometres long, this stunning gorge is an ideal place for a hike. You can read information about the area on the panels.

7494, Switzerland (46.69918, 9.72510)



C Scaletta Pass

Scaletta Pass is a mountain pass in the canton of Graubünden, Switzerland. It lies in the Albula Range of the Alps.

7260, Switzerland (46.69266, 9.92029)



D Strelapass

High-altitude mountain pass in the Plessur Alps connecting Davos with Sapün and Langwies in the Schanfigg valley.

7260, Switzerland (46.81285, 9.79615)



E Maienfelder Furgga

Alpine pass situated at 2,436 meters above sea level, serving as a hiking link between Davos and Arosa.

7276, Switzerland (46.77042, 9.73189)



F Latschüelfurgga

Mountain pass at an elevation of 2,409 meters, providing a trail connection between Davos and the Langwies/Arosa region.

7270, Switzerland (46.80197, 9.77717)



G Flüela Wisshorn

The Flüela Wisshorn is a mountain of the Silvretta Alps, overlooking the Flüela Pass in the Swiss canton of Graubünden.

7260, Switzerland (46.76223, 9.96666)



H Amselflue Westgipfel

The Amselflue is a mountain of the Plessur Alps, overlooking Arosa in the canton of Graubünden.

7050, Switzerland (46.76386, 9.72901)



I Weissfluh

The Weissfluh is a mountain of the Plessur Alps, located above Davos in the canton of Graubünden.

7260, Switzerland (46.83463, 9.79476)

J Chüealphorn

The Chüealphorn is a mountain of the Albula Alps, overlooking the Scaletta Pass, in Graubünden, Switzerland.

7260, Switzerland (46.68537, 9.90536)



K Piz Vadret

Piz Vadret is a mountain of the Albula Alps, in Graubünden. With an altitude of 3,229 metres above sea level, Piz Vadret is the highest...

7542, Switzerland (46.68702, 9.96269)



L Gotschnagrat

The Gotschnagrat is a mountain of the Plessur Alps, overlooking Klosters in the canton of Graubünden.

Bergrestaurant Gotschnagrat, 7250, Switzerland (46.85838, 9.84636)



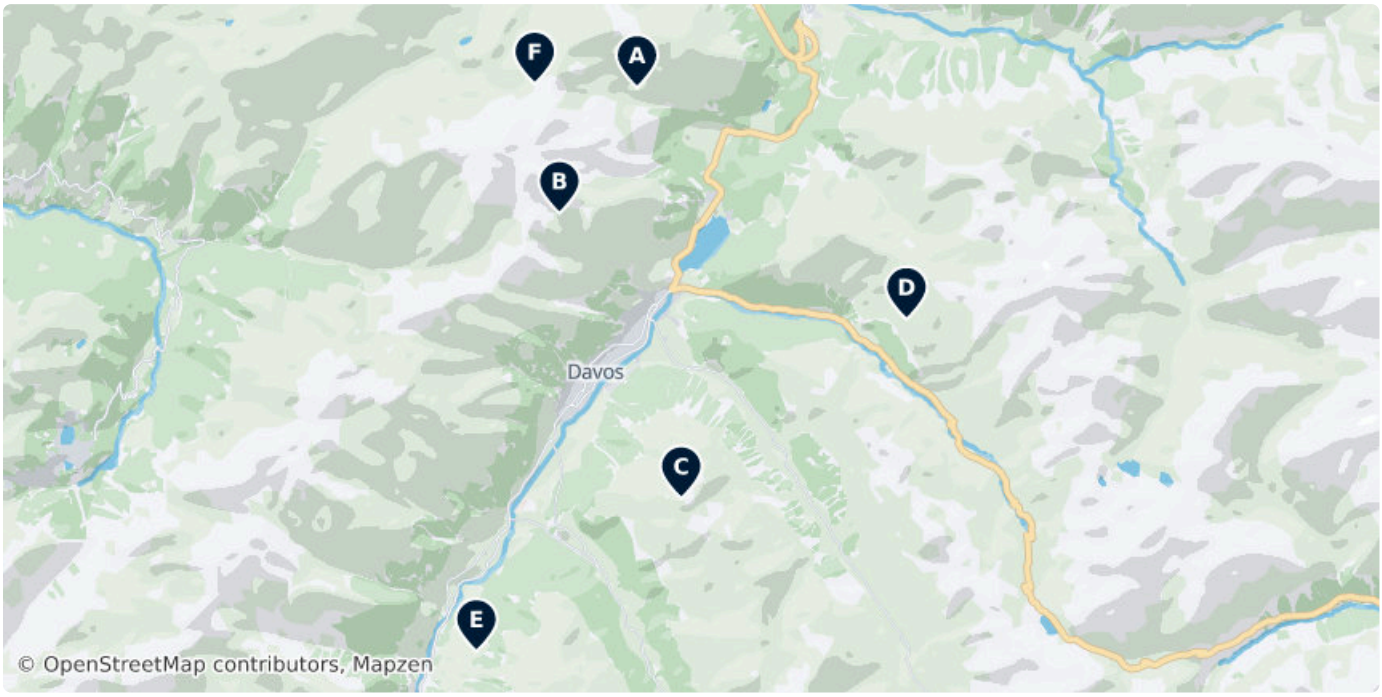
M Weissfluhjoch

The Weissfluhjoch is a summit southeast of the Weissfluh situated in the Plessur Range in Graubünden.

7260, Switzerland (46.83283, 9.80496)

Skiing & Winter Sports in Davos

Davos Klosters is one of Switzerland's most extensive winter sports destinations, comprising five distinct mountain sectors. The historic Parsenn area, accessed via the Parsenn Funicular, offers 35 wide slopes and long valley runs connecting Davos to Klosters. Jakobshorn serves as a hub for freestyle skiing with its professional terrain parks, while Pischa focuses on off-piste freeriding and winter hiking. Rinerhorn provides a mix of intermediate terrain and a dedicated toboggan run, all linked by a modern lift network including the Schiferbahn gondola.





A Davos Klosters

Parsenn is a ski area near Davos, Switzerland, offering 35 ski runs.

7260, Switzerland (46.84870, 9.83490)

davos.ch/en/



B Parsenn Funicular

The Parsenn Funicular is a funicular railway in the resort of Davos in the Swiss canton of Graubünden.

7260, Switzerland (46.82554, 9.81399)

C Jakobshorn

Mountain sector known for freestyle skiing, featuring a professional terrain park and halfpipe at the Bolgen area.

7270, Switzerland (46.77300, 9.84683)

davos.ch/entdecken/berge/jakobshorn

D Pischabahn

Cable car accessing a mountain area dedicated to freeride skiing, snowshoeing, and high-altitude winter hiking trails.

7260, Switzerland (46.80600, 9.90747)

E Rinerhornbahn

Gondola lift serving the Rinerhorn sector, which includes various ski pistes and a 3.5-kilometer-long illuminated toboggan track.

Rinerhornstrasse, 7277, Switzerland (46.74479, 9.79166)

F Schiferbahn

Two-section gondola lift that connects the Schifer area to the main Parsenn ski network, facilitating one of the longest downhill runs in the Alps.

7249, Switzerland (46.84935, 9.80733)

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