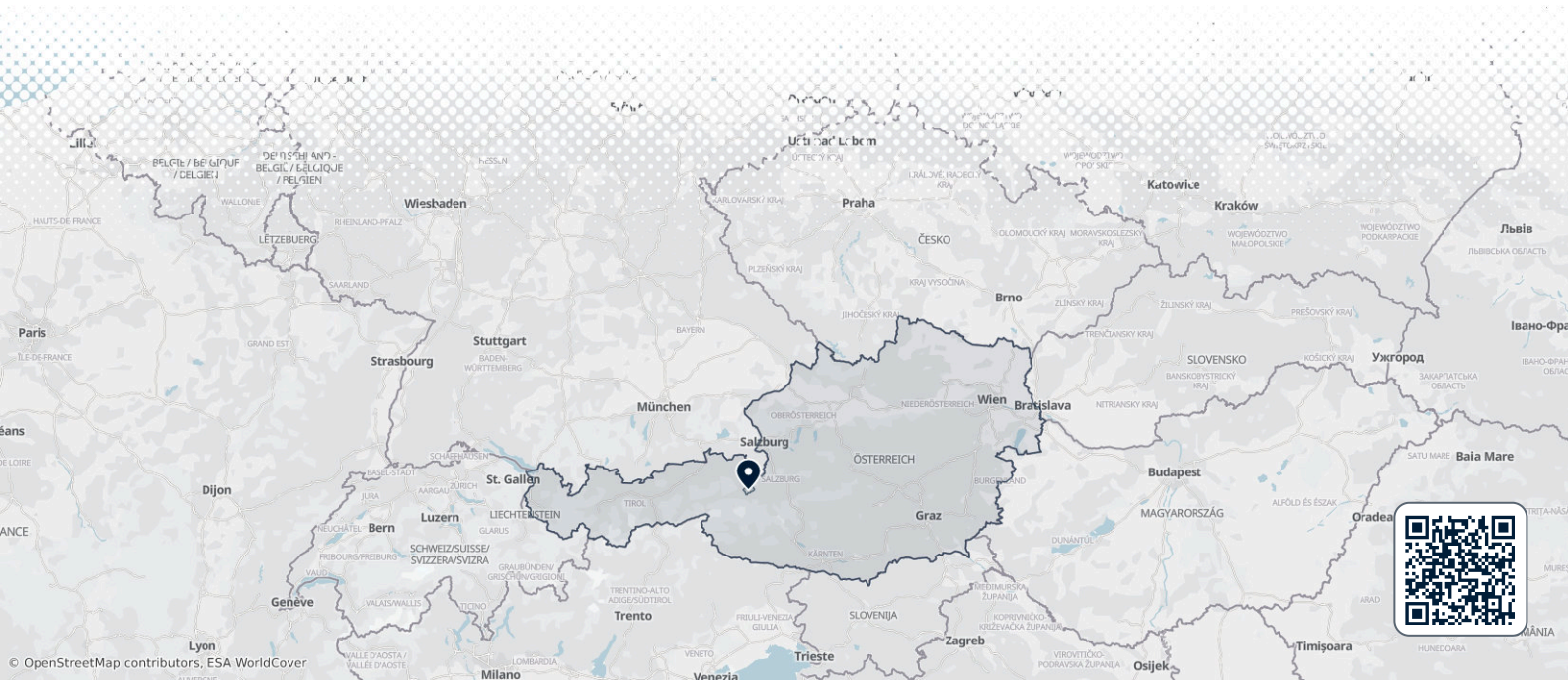


Zell am See

Salzburg · Austria

TRAVEL GUIDE

Tripomatic



Overview

Zell am See sits on the shore of a clear alpine lake, with the Kitzsteinhorn glacier and the Schmittenhöhe above it. The old town is small and sits on a peninsula in the lake.

The resort works in both seasons. In winter it has ski slopes and a glacier nearby. In summer, visitors swim, sail and hike. Together with Kaprun, it forms the Europe Sport Region.

When to visit

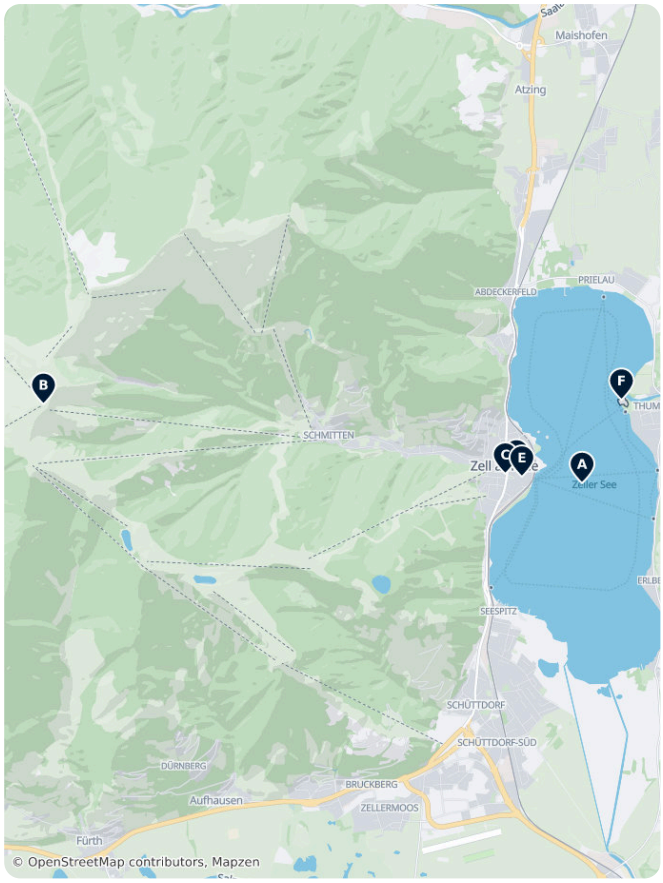
December to March is ski season, and the glacier at Kaprun gives reliable snow. June to September is warm enough for lake swimming and hiking. Spring and autumn are quiet, and some lifts close for maintenance. Winters are cold and snowy.

MONTH	CONDITIONS	DAY °C avg / max	NIGHT °C avg / min	
January	Good Good for skiing	3° / 8° Feels like -1°	-5° / -14°	14 rainy days · Dry air · Calm winds
February	Good Good for skiing	4° / 11° Feels like 0°	-4° / -14°	13 rainy days · Dry air · Calm winds
March	Fair Fair for skiing	8° / 16° Feels like 5°	-1° / -10°	16 rainy days · Dry air · Calm winds
April	Fair Fair for cycling	13° / 22°	3° / -4°	15 rainy days · Dry air · Calm winds
May	Fair Fair for hiking	18° / 25°	7° / 2°	21 rainy days · Dry air · Calm winds
June	Fair Fair for hiking	22° / 29°	12° / 6°	21 rainy days · Calm winds
July	Fair Fair for cycling	23° / 30°	13° / 8°	22 rainy days · Calm winds
August	Fair Fair for cycling	23° / 30°	13° / 9°	20 rainy days · Calm winds
September	Good Good for hiking	19° / 26°	9° / 4°	16 rainy days · Dry air · Calm winds
October	Good Good for cycling	15° / 22°	6° / -1°	14 rainy days · Dry air · Calm winds
November	Fair Fair for cycling	8° / 17°	1° / -8°	14 rainy days · Dry air · Calm winds
December	Good Good for skiing	4° / 10° Feels like 0°	-3° / -13°	14 rainy days · Dry air · Calm winds

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

Top sights

- A Zeller See is the lake at the heart of the town. Swim, rent a boat or walk the shore path.
- B Schmittenhöhe is the town's own mountain, reached by cable car, with ski runs and summer hiking trails.
- C Schloss Rosenberg is a small castle in the old town.
- D Vogtturm Museum is a museum of local history in a medieval tower.
- E Stadtpfarrkirche St. Hippolyt is the parish church in the old town.
- F Strandbad Thumersbach is a lido on the quieter side of the lake.
- The Kitzsteinhorn glacier above Kaprun gives year-round snow and views.
- The Grossglockner High Alpine Road, Austria's highest paved pass, is about 45 minutes away.



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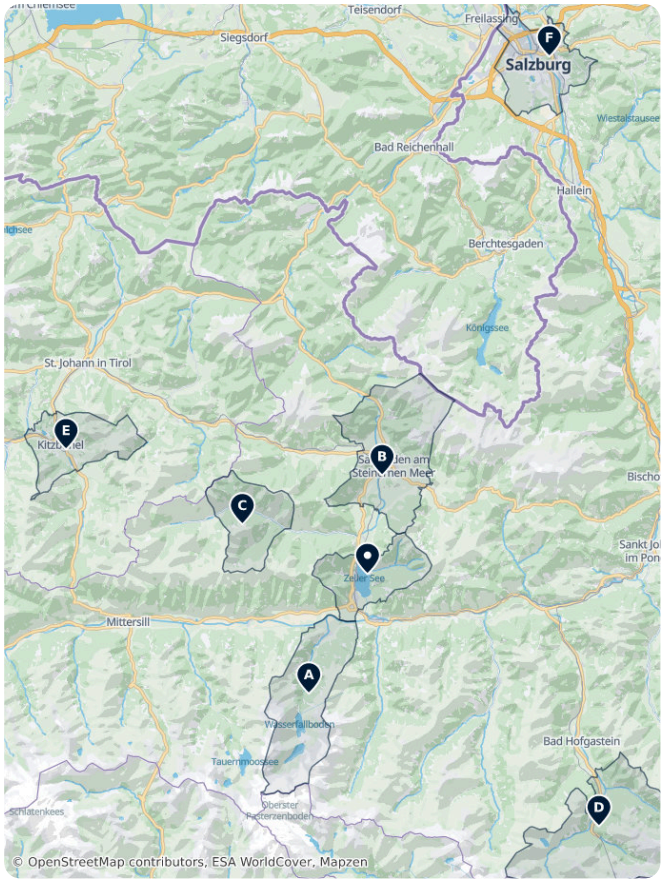
What to experience

- Ski the Schmittenhöhe or the Kitzsteinhorn glacier.
- Swim and paddle on the lake in summer.
- Walk or cycle around the lake.
- Take a cable car and hike a ridge trail.
- Drive the Grossglockner High Alpine Road in summer.

Day trips

- A Kaprun is the gateway to the Kitzsteinhorn glacier, about 15 minutes away.
- B Saalfelden lies in a valley under rocky peaks, about 20 minutes away.
- C Saalbach is a large ski area, about 30 minutes away.
- D Bad Gastein is a historic spa town in a waterfall setting, about 1 hour by car.
- E Kitzbühel is a famous ski town, about 45 minutes by car.
- F Salzburg is about 1 hour by car or 1 hour 30 minutes by train.



Where to explore

- Kaprun, Saalfelden and Saalbach are the closest resorts.

Getting there

- By air: Salzburg Airport is about 1 hour away by car. Innsbruck and Munich are the other options.
- By train: Zell am See has a station on the Salzburg–Innsbruck line. Salzburg takes about 1 hour 30 minutes. Check times on ÖBB.
- By car: The town is reached from the A10 motorway via the B311 road.

Getting around

The old town and the lakefront are small and walkable. Local buses and ski buses link Kaprun and other nearby villages. Boats cross the lake in summer. A summer card gives free use of cable cars and public transport in the region.

Getting around on foot & by bike

WALKABILITY

High

The old town and lakefront are flat and compact. The mountains are reached by cable car.

CYCLING INFRASTRUCTURE

High

A flat path circles the lake, and many mountain bike routes start nearby.

Driving

A car is helpful for the Grossglockner road and nearby valleys. The old town has restricted traffic. Winter tyres or chains are required in snow. Motorways in Austria need a vignette. The Grossglockner road is a toll road and is closed in winter.

Food & drink

Salzburg-region food includes *Kasnocken*, cheese dumplings, and *Kaiserschmarrn*. Lake fish such as char and whitefish appear on menus. Mountain huts serve simple dishes in summer and winter.

What to eat & drink

DINNER

Wiener Schnitzel
A thin, breaded and pan-fried veal cutlet, traditionally served with potato salad or parsley potatoes and a wedge of lemon.

Tafelspitz
Boiled beef in broth, served with roast potatoes and a sauce of apples and horseradish — a favourite of Emperor Franz Joseph.

Viennese Goulash · Wiener Saftgulasch
A rich beef stew slow-cooked with onions and paprika, typically served with a bread dumpling or bread roll.

SNACKS & STREET FOOD

Käsekrainer
A grilled pork sausage studded with melty cheese, a classic order at Vienna's ubiquitous Würstelstand (sausage stands).

Sausage Stand Snack · Würstel vom Würstelstand
Grilled or boiled sausages (Bratwurst, Frankfurter, Bosna) served with mustard, bread and a pickle from street kiosks.

SWEETS & DESSERTS

Apfelstrudel
Thin pastry rolled around spiced apples, raisins and breadcrumbs, usually served warm with vanilla sauce or cream.

Sachertorte
A dense chocolate cake with a thin layer of apricot jam under a dark chocolate glaze, famously served with unsweetened whipped cream.

Kaiserschmarrn
A fluffy shredded pancake caramelised with sugar and dusted with icing sugar, served with plum or apple compote.

Marillenknödel
Apricot dumplings wrapped in potato or quark dough, rolled in buttery breadcrumbs — a Wachau and Viennese summer specialty.

DRINKS

Viennese Melange · Wiener Melange
The signature Viennese coffee: espresso topped with steamed milk and milk foam, the centrepiece of coffeehouse culture.

Grüner Veltliner
Austria's flagship crisp, peppery white wine, widely poured in Vienna's Heuriger (wine taverns).

Sturm
A cloudy, lightly alcoholic partially-fermented grape must, available only for a few weeks in autumn.

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Safety & health

Zell am See is very safe. Be careful on the water in changing weather. Stay on marked runs and follow avalanche warnings in winter. Tap water is clean and safe to drink. The emergency number is 112. The mountain rescue number is 140.

History

Zell am See grew around a monastery cell founded in the 8th century, from which it takes its name. It later became a market town and a base for trade. Tourism grew in the 19th century with the railway and the lake. The Kitzsteinhorn cable cars opened in the 1960s.

Country facts

Quick practical facts for Austria at a glance:

CURRENCY
EUR €

EMERGENCY
112

ELECTRICITY

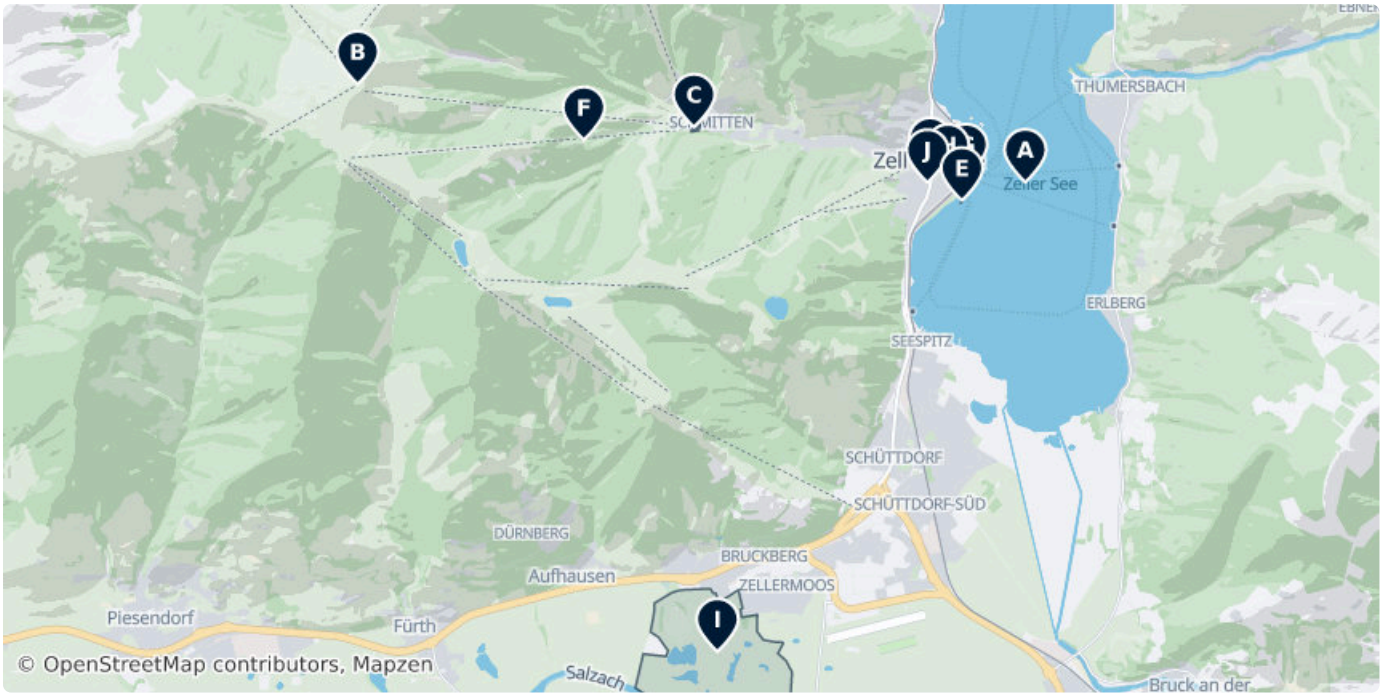
Type C / Type F
230 V · 50 Hz

LANGUAGES
German

TAP WATER
Safe to drink

Zell am See Essentials

This selection highlights the architectural and natural landmarks of Zell am See. It features the 1,965-meter Schmittenhöhe peak and its associated ski resort, alongside the freshwater Lake Zell. Historic sites include Schloss Rosenberg, a 16th-century castle now serving as the town hall, and the heritage-protected district court. Visitors can explore the lakeside Esplanade, watch the Zeller Seezauber fountain show, or play on the 36-hole golf course, which is the largest in the Austrian Alps.





A Lake Zell

Lake Zell is a small freshwater lake in the Austrian Alps. It takes its name from the city of Zell am See, which is located on a small delta...

5700, Austria (47.32253, 12.80623)



B Schmittenhöhe

The Schmittenhöhe is a mountain, 1,965 m high, on the eastern edge of the Kitzbühel Alps.

20 Schmitten, 5752, Austria (47.32936, 12.73762)

C Schmittenhöhebahn

This cable car provides access to the 1,965-meter summit of the Schmittenhöhe. It features cabins designed by Porsche Design Studio, offering panoramic views of over 30 peaks exceeding 3,000 meters.

119 Schmittenstraße, Schmitten 5700, Austria (47.32638, 12.77219)

D Schloss Rosenberg

A 16th-century castle built in the style of the Salzburg Renaissance. Since 1970, it has served as the town hall and administrative center for Zell am See.

(47.32334, 12.79645)



E Zeller Seezauber

A synchronized water, light, and music show held at Elisabeth Park on the lakefront. Performances typically take place in the evenings during the summer months.

8 Elisabeth-Promenade, Zell am See 5700, Austria (47.32127, 12.79972)



F Zell am See Ski Resort

This resort offers 77 kilometers of groomed slopes and 28 modern lifts. It is part of the Alpin Card network, with terrain suitable for all skill levels on the Schmittenhöhe mountain.

5700, Austria (47.32547, 12.76087)

schmitten.at

G Esplanade

A paved lakeside promenade offering walking paths, boat rentals, and the main pier for lake cruises and ferry crossings.

Esplanade, 5700 Zell am See, Austria (47.32289, 12.80017)

H Stadtcafe Estl

Traditional Austrian cafe and confectionery located in the town center, known for its selection of homemade cakes and pastries.

(47.32288, 12.79829)

I Zell am See - Kaprun Golf Club

This is the biggest golf course in the Alps! Whether you are a beginner or a professional, here you can experience unique golfing.

Golfstraße 25, 5700 Zell am See, AT (47.28984, 12.77459)

golf-zellamsee.at, +43 6542 56161-0

J Bezirksgericht Zell am See

The district court is housed in a heritage-protected building that forms part of the city's historic architectural ensemble.

Mozartstraße, 5700 Zell am See, Austria (47.32252, 12.79618)

justiz.gv.at/web2013/html/default/2c94848..., +43 57 60121

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