

PRESS BASE TEXT: ALPIN ARENA WINTER

## YOUR “ADVENTURE HOLIDAY” ALREADY STARTS IN SEPTEMBER

Alpin Arena Senales – winter vacations amidst 126 mountain summits of above three-thousand-metres.

Val Senales Valley/Maso Corto: Between September and May, enjoy all kinds of winter sports at the Alpin Arena Senales at 3,251 metres. With perfectly groomed slopes suited to all ability levels, a 3.3-km sled run, and a High-Alpine – Italian/Mediterranean lifestyle combine to create a unique outdoor winter experience. Start carving your first turns across the snow-covered slopes as early as the third weekend in September, before soaking in the warm waters at the thermal baths down in nearby Merano. Relax afterwards with an *'aperitivo'* amidst the vineyards. Only in South Tyrol can you find such a unique cultural blend. This corner at the end of the Val Senales Valley also offers other points of interest, such as the site where Ötzi (the world-renowned glacier mummy) was discovered thirty years ago.

### SKIING ADVENTURES FOR THE WHOLE FAMILY

The 2022 winter season already kicked off on 16<sup>th</sup> September, when the Val Senales Glacier Cable Car started operating, taking visitors up to 3,251 metres above sea level. Ideal conditions for Alpine/Nordic winter sports at the Alpin Arena Senales last until May. Advanced skiers are drawn to the glacier ski area's downhill ski runs, the “Leo Gurschler” slalom and giant slalom training course (named after the prime mover behind the Val Senales Glacier Cable Car project), and the 8-km Schmutzgler downhill run extending as far as the Maso Corto cable car valley station. But even the most experienced skiers have to stay alert when attempting the daunting Teufelsegg downhill run, which also challenges the most adept. Not far from the glacier, the blue slopes of the Alpin Arena Senales are more suited to recreational skiers and beginners. With its 21 slopes and eleven ski lifts, the Val Senales Valley ski area caters to the full range of outdoor winter sports activities – at all levels of ability.

### IDEAL SPORTS TRAINING CONDITIONS

The very location of the Val Senales Valley glacier makes it ideal as a winter sports training area. As one of the main alpine and cross-country skiing destinations in Italy, professional athletes are attracted to the high slopes of the Alpin Arena. Officially partnered with the Italian Ski Association (FISI), the Val Senales Valley is firmly embedded in their respective training calendars. With the “Alpin Arena Senales” logo emblazoned on his helmet, all-round skier Riccardo Tonetti (32) from Bolzano has represented the Alpin Arena Senales at the Alpine Ski World Cup since 2014. This is also true of living snowboard legend, Roland Fischnaller.

### A WINTER SPORTS PARADISE

Besides its meticulously groomed skiing and snowboarding slopes, the Alpin Arena also offers ideal conditions for a number of other winter sports. The sun-kissed 3.3 km Lazaun **sled run** winds its way downhill through the snow-covered pine forest as far as the cable car valley station in Maso Corto. In October, ahead of the winter season, Nordic sports get going in the Val Senales Valley glacier, along the **high-elevation cross-country ski trails**. Like on the ski slopes, the expectations of both professional and recreational skaters, as well as cross-country

skiers are fully realised. The snowy Hochjoch cross-country ski circuit winds along 5 – 10 km of open terrain, providing ideal conditions for high-altitude training. Opening in mid-December, the more accessible Lazaun cross-country trail enables beginners to learn the rudiments of cross-country skiing along its 2-km trails, while more experienced skiers enjoy practicing their sport against a magnificent mountain backdrop.

### MOUTH-WATERING REST STOPS

The ubiquitous manned mountain huts offer visitors to the Alpin Arena Senales the opportunity to stop and enjoy the breath-taking views. The restaurants at the Lazaun, Teufelsegg and Bella Vista mountain refuges also offer the chance to try their delicious local specialities. The Bella Vista hut boasts an outdoor whirlpool, igloos, as well as sauna facilities, all at the highest elevation in the entire Alpine region. In the spectacular mountain landscape of the Hochjochferner, the Grawand Glacier Hotel & Restaurant is a stand-out attraction. The hotel buffet (open during the day) and restaurant menu highlight both Italian delicacies as well as traditional South Tyrolean specialities. While on the subject of cuisine – here's a fun fact: did you know that the cooking of pasta at the Grawand Glacier Restaurant takes about two minutes longer than down in the valley? This is due to the high altitude that reduces atmospheric pressure, causing water to boil at 89° Celsius. The panoramic terrace at Europe's highest elevation hotel (3,212 m) offers an extraordinary view of the surrounding mountains immersed in a magnificent world of snow and permafrost.

### MILD SUMMER TEMPERATURES

During the summer months, the Alpin Arena Senales offers ideal hiking conditions (don't forget to bring your hiking boots with you). Between June and September, the glacier remains an outdoor attraction thanks to its mild climate and awe-inspiring mountain panoramas – crowned by 126 summits at over 3,000 m. The newly-built **Iceman Ötzi Peak** lookout platform on the Grawandspitze peak offers breath-taking views at 3,251 m. From there you can see where "Ötzi", the world-renown glacier mummy, was discovered back in 1991 – in a glistening snow-field at the foot of the majestic Similaun. Just a 10-minute walk from the upper cable car station, the Iceman Ötzi Peak viewing platform is accessible via a stone stairway (with handrail). Adjacent to the viewing platform, the **"Our Glacial Perspectives" art installation** by Icelandic-Danish artist, Olafur Eliasson, commissioned by the "Talking Waters" Association, provides innovative insights into a different world. Not far off, the more adventurous can enjoy a thrilling ride in **mountain carts** along a 4-km forest track, that runs from the Lazaun upper cable car station down into the valley. We also have an offer for our climbing freaks: the action-packed via ferrata "Larix" and the Alpin Trail hiking trail that runs parallel to it.

### REALISING VISIONS

In the coming years, the Val Senales Glacier Cable Car administration will be working to further develop the range of outdoor facilities available in the Alpin Arena Senales. By 2025, both the summer and winter sports infrastructure will have been expanded, enlivening this far corner of the Val Senales Valley.

### OTHER ATTRACTIONS IN THE ALPIN ARENA SENALES:

- **Glacier Wine Rally:** This unusual wine-tasting event leads skiers and winter-hikers from one hut to another, pairing regional wines with delicacies from the Val Senales Valley. Find out more [here](#)
- **Iceman Ötzi Peak:** With its breath-taking panorama at an elevation of 3,251 m, this lookout platform directs one's gaze to the discovery site of the world's most famous glacier mummy: Ötzi, the Iceman. Find out more [here](#)

- **Ötzi Glacier Tour:** Spend the day retracing the footsteps of the 5,000-year-old man from the glacier on touring skis in winter – as well as summer hiking. On Tuesdays, day-long excursions are led by experienced mountain guides, including celebrity mountaineers such as Reinhold Messner and Thomas Huber (“Huberbuam”). It’s well worth checking the website. Find more [here](#)
- **Transhumance:** The traditional annual livestock transhumance is a veritable attraction in the Val Senales Valley. Added to the “UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage List” in 2019, huge flocks of 3,000 – 4,000 sheep from the villages of Vernago and Maso Corto in the Val Senales Valley are shepherded annually, in mid-June, across the Niederjoch and Hochjoch ridges to graze on the high summer pastures near Vent, in the Austrian Ötztal. One of its kind, this transhumance crosses not only the glacier – but also a national border! Find out more [here](#)
- **Glacier Adventure Card Winter:** The “Glacier Adventure Card Winter” offers a fantastic day-long excursion in the Val Senales Valley glacier. After taking two ski lifts and a short hike, you arrive at the “Bella Vista” refuge amidst the spellbinding Alpine terrain. Find more [here](#)

For further information about the Alpin Arena Senales: [www.schnalstal.com](http://www.schnalstal.com)

#### ABOUT THE ALPIN ARENA SENALES:

At the far end of the Val Senales Valley in South Tyrol, near the uppermost settlement of Maso Corto – the Alpine Arena is surrounded by no fewer than 126 summits rising above 3,000 m, creating the effect of a massive outdoor stadium. The umbrella brand comprises a ski centre as well as a glacier ski area, the Grawand Glacier Hotel, a number of mountain and valley restaurants, the Caravan Park as well as the Iceman Ötzi Peak. Not far from the rolling vineyards of Merano, the Val Senales Valley also offers ideal conditions for a variety of summer sports. The ski season on the glacier is already open in mid-September, allowing snow-skiing on the mountain slopes. After a morning on the slopes, you can look forward to relaxing under the warm afternoon sunshine in the hotel gardens around the swimming pools.

More at [www.schnalstal.com](http://www.schnalstal.com)