

Ski in Slovakia in style

There are many places in the world to go and ski - like the Alps, Bulgaria or North America. But have you ever considered skiing in Slovakia? The country that is in the heart of Central Europe has an abundance of ski slopes in the Tatra Mountains. In fact the country has a long skiing tradition. Coming to Slovakia won't even break the bank, as the cost of living makes it one of the cheapest places to currently visit in the eurozone. The euro is another major plus point for visitors when they visit the country now. Slovakia lies within the Carpathian mountain system, which after the Alps is the second largest and longest in Europe. The huge arc of the Carpathians begins beside the Danube, close to Bratislava, and stretches through the length of Slovakia, Ukraine and Romania.

Slovakia's dramatic High Tatra Mountains remain one of Europe's best kept skiing secrets. They form perfect terrain for families and novices alike and have such charming if unpronounceable resorts like Strbske Pleso, Starý Smokovec and Tatranska Lomnica that provide an intriguing mix of old and new. All ski resorts offer cable cars, gondolas, chairlifts or drag lifts. During warmer weeks in winter, resorts have equipped the slopes with facilities for making artificial snow. Slovak ski slopes are also very popular for snowboarding. For more advanced skiers the resort of Jasná in the Low Tatra Mountains has more challenging skiing and boarding including some great freeride terrain. Both mountain ranges are a short transfer from the inbound airports of Košice – 1 hour and Poprad – 10 mins with direct two-hour flights to Manchester and Luton in the UK. With new ski resort accommodation opening, staying in the country is a positive delight. Needless to say the country's ski slopes are highly popular with the locals! Ski packages in the UK to Slovakia start around £299. This includes flights and transfers, seven nights B&B accommodation, transfer to the slopes and a 6 day ski lift pass.

Category: Europe / Slovakia / Skiing

Level: Intermediate / Upper intermediate

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EXERCISES

1. Skiing: Do you go skiing? Which country do you go skiing in? Which ski resort did you last visit? Why there? Go round the room swapping details.

2. Geography +: Ski resorts: Where are the top five countries for skiing in? Why these? Draw a map on the board to show where they are then **look on Google maps** to help you.

3. Dictation: The teacher will read four to six lines of the article slowly and clearly. Students will write down what they hear. The teacher will repeat the passage slowly again. Self-correct your work from page one - filling in spaces and correcting mistakes. Be honest with yourself on the number of errors. Advise the teacher of your total number of errors. Less than five is very good. Ten is acceptable. Any more is room for improvement! More than twenty - you need to do some work!

4. Reading: The students should now read the article aloud, swapping readers every paragraph.

5. Vocabulary: Students should now look through the article and underline any vocabulary they do not know. Look in dictionaries. Discuss and help each other out. The teacher will go through and explain any unknown words or phrases.

6. The article: Students should look through the article with the teacher.

- a) What is the article about?
- b) What do you think about the article?
- c) How was/is the skiing industry affected by the economic crisis?
- d) Is Slovakia a good place to ski?

7. Let's think! You are off on a skiing holiday next week. Think of five things you will take with you. (Imagine!) Then think of five things what you might do whilst on holiday. Write them below. Explain to your partner why you chose these.

Things to take with you	What you might do whilst on holiday?
1	1
2	2
3	3
4	4
5	5

The teacher will choose some pairs to discuss their findings in front of the class.

8. Quick debate: In pairs. Students A thinks skiing in Europe is best. Students B think otherwise and name their choice of country(s) for skiing. Explain why.

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9 . Let's think! In pairs. On the board write as many words as you can to do with the '**Skiing**'. *One-two minutes*. Compare with other teams. Using your words compile a short dialogue together.

10. Ski resorts! What are your favourite ski resorts and why? List your top five below. Then try to find the top five favourite Slovak ski resorts. (You might need to use the internet for this!) Write them below. Explain to your partner why you chose these.

Top five skiing resorts	Top five Slovak skiing resorts
1	1
2	2
3	3
4	4
5	5

The teacher will choose some pairs to discuss their findings in front of the class.

11. Let's talk! Radio USA: *In pairs/groups*. You are in the Radio USA studio. One of you is the presenter; the other student(s) is/are one the people listed below. Try to get a balanced interview. *5 minutes*.

1	A tour operator	3	A skiing hotel owner
2	A skiing journalist	4	A skier

The teacher will choose some pairs to tell their stories in front of the class.

12. Let's do 'The Article Quiz': Have the students quiz each other in pairs. They score a point for each correct answer and half a point each time they have to look at the article for help. See who can get the highest score!

Student A

- 1) Name the countries.
- 2) Name the mountains.
- 3) How much is the holiday in Slovakia?
- 4) All ski resorts offer what?
- 5) Name the airport cities.

Student B

- 1) Can you name the unpronounceable ski resorts?
- 2) Name the river.
- 3) What happens during warmer weeks in winter?
- 4) What is very popular in Slovakia?
- 5) What is B&B?

13. Let's write an e-mail: Write and send a 200 word e-mail to your teacher about: **Skiing in 2011**. Your e-mail can be read out in class.

14. Sentence starters: Finish these sentence starters. Correct your mistakes. Compare what other people have written.

- a) I like skiing _____
- b) Skiing is _____
- c) The snow _____

DISCUSSION

Student A questions

- 1) Did the headline make you want to read the article?
- 2) Have you ever been skiing? Where?
- 3) What other snow activities can you do?
- 4) What is the nightlife like on a skiing holiday?
- 5) Do you like to go off-piste snowing?
- 6) Can you snow plough? What other skiing techniques can you do?
- 7) Have you ever had mountain rescue? If yes, where?
- 8) Have you ever encountered really bad conditions on a mountain?
- 9) Who do you go skiing with?
- 10) *Did you ever/do you go skiing with your school?*

Student B questions

- 1) What do you think about what you read?
- 2) Are you a good skier?
- 3) Can you ski down a black slope?
- 4) Have you ever entered a skiing competition?
- 5) What is extreme skiing? Have you ever tried it?
- 6) What are the ski run 'colours'? How do these vary in different countries?
- 7) What is the best sort of snow?
- 8) Have you ever tried ski jumping?
- 9) Are you going skiing this year? If yes, where?
- 10) Did you like this discussion?

SPEAKING

Travel Agency

Allow 10-15 minutes – As a class / small groups / pairs / 1 to 1

Student A You are in a travel agency. You want to go skiing. Where to go? You need advise from the travel sales person.

Think of three good questions to ask the travel sales person.

Student B You are the travel sales person. Your job is to assist the clients booking and choosing their holidays. This includes ski holidays. You are on commission! If you can sell a ski holiday today with ski insurance you get a special 25% bonus.

Find out where they want to stay, what accommodation they want – self catering / B&B / half board / full board / all inclusive. Offer the client three good ski resorts and three countries to choose from.

Student C Optional extra – goes in with student A.

The teacher can moderate the session.

GAP FILL: READING:

Put the words into the gaps in the text.

Ski in Slovakia in style

There are many places in the world to go and (1)_____ - like the Alps, Bulgaria or North America. But have you ever considered (2)_____ in Slovakia? The country that is in the (3)_____ of Central Europe has an (4)_____ of ski slopes in the Tatra Mountains. In fact the country has a long skiing tradition. Coming to Slovakia won't even break the bank, as the cost of living makes it one of the cheapest places to currently visit in the (5)_____. The euro is another major plus point for visitors when they visit the country now. Slovakia lies within the Carpathian mountain system, which after the Alps is the second largest and longest in Europe. The huge (6)_____ of the (7)_____ begins beside the Danube, close to Bratislava, and stretches through the length of Slovakia, Ukraine and Romania.

Slovakia's dramatic High Tatra Mountains remain one of Europe's best kept skiing secrets. They form perfect terrain for families and (1)_____ alike and have such charming if unpronounceable resorts like Strbske Pleso, Starý Smokovec and Tatranska Lomnica that provide an intriguing mix of old and new. All ski (2)_____ offer cable cars, gondolas, chairlifts or drag lifts. During warmer weeks in (3)_____, resorts have equipped the slopes with facilities for making (4)_____ snow. Slovak ski slopes are also very popular for (5)_____. For more advanced (6)_____ the resort of Jasná in the Low Tatra Mountains has more challenging skiing and boarding including some great (7)_____ terrain. Both mountain ranges are a short transfer from the inbound airports of Košice – 1 hour and Poprad – 10 mins with direct two-hour flights to Manchester and Luton in the UK. With new ski resort accommodation opening, staying in the country is a positive delight. Needless to say the country's ski slopes are highly popular with the locals! Ski (8)_____ in the UK to Slovakia start around £299. This includes flights and transfers, seven nights B&B accommodation, transfer to the slopes and a 6 day ski lift pass.

ski

skiing

heart

Carpathians

eurozone

abundance

arc

novices

skiers

resorts

packages

freeride

snowboarding

artificial

winter

GAP FILL: LISTENING:

Listen and fill in the spaces.

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There are many places _____ and ski - like the Alps, Bulgaria or North America. But have you ever considered skiing in Slovakia? The country that _____ Central Europe has an abundance of ski slopes in the Tatra Mountains. In fact _____ long skiing tradition. Coming to Slovakia won't even break the bank, as the cost of living makes it one of the cheapest places to currently visit in the eurozone. The euro is another major plus point for visitors when they visit the country now. Slovakia lies within the _____ system, which after the Alps is the second largest and longest in Europe. The huge arc of the Carpathians begins beside the Danube, _____, and stretches through the length of Slovakia, Ukraine and Romania.

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GRAMMAR

Put the words into the gaps in the text.

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There are many places in the world to go (1)___ ski - like the Alps, Bulgaria or North America. But have you ever considered skiing in Slovakia? The country that is in the heart of Central Europe has an abundance of ski slopes in the Tatra Mountains. In fact (2)___ country has a long skiing tradition. Coming to Slovakia won't even break the bank, (3)___ the cost of living makes it one of the cheapest places (4)___ currently visit in the eurozone. The euro is another major plus point (5)___ visitors when they visit the country (6)___ . Slovakia lies within the Carpathian mountain system, which after the Alps is the second largest and longest in Europe. The huge arc (7)___ the Carpathians begins beside the Danube, close to Bratislava, and stretches through the length of Slovakia, Ukraine and Romania.

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SPELLING TEST

The teacher will ask the class individually to spell the following words that are in the article. Afterwards, check your answers with your teacher, using the following ratings: **Pass = 12, Good = 15, Very good = 18, Excellent = 20**

1	unpronounceable	11	intriguing
2	abundance	12	transfer
3	artificial	13	tradition
4	freeride	14	Carpathians
5	gondolas	15	popular
6	facilities	16	snowboarding
7	arc	17	dramatic
8	terrain	18	packages
9	novices	19	needless
10	accommodation	20	challenging

LINKS

<http://www.travelslovakia.sk/slovakia-ski/ski-slovakia-jasna.php>

<http://www.ski-school.sk/en/ticket.shtml>

<http://www.skiinfo.co.uk/>

<http://www.parksnow.sk/tatry/en/index.php>

<http://www.skislovakia.sk/>

<http://slovakia.europe-mountains.com/>

ANSWERS

GAP FILL: Ski in Slovakia in style: There are many places in the world to go and **ski** - like the Alps, Bulgaria or North America. But have you ever considered **skiing** in Slovakia? The country that is in the **heart** of Central Europe has an **abundance** of ski slopes in the Tatra Mountains. In fact the country has a long skiing tradition. Coming to Slovakia won't even break the bank, as the cost of living makes it one of the cheapest places to currently visit in the **eurozone**. The euro is another major plus point for visitors when they visit the country now. Slovakia lies within the Carpathian mountain system, which after the Alps is the second largest and longest in Europe. The huge **arc** of the **Carpathians** begins beside the Danube, close to Bratislava, and stretches through the length of Slovakia, Ukraine and Romania.

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