

# BELLEVUE WIESEN

Continuing our series on small, off-the-radar hotels, **Pamela Goodman** takes to the slopes of Davos and finds a comfortable hideaway that's perfect for a relaxed Swiss skiing holiday

Am I alone in finding that the name Davos conjures up images of global leaders in the January snow pontificating about the complex state of world economics? Am I alone in failing to know that Davos is, in fact, a city rather than a town and, what's more, the highest one in Europe? And am I alone in never having registered that, from a skiing perspective, Davos and its glamorous neighbour Klosters cover pretty much the same area?

In the light of these revelations, it will come as no surprise that the village of Davos Wiesen meant absolutely nothing to me until I was informed that it is one of six parts making up the city as a whole. Even this, though, is a tad confusing, as Davos Wiesen is a good 20-minute drive from the thronging city centre and in all but the association of its name appears as nothing other than a sleepy Swiss hamlet with soul-stirring views of unblemished valleys and mountains.

The Bellevue Wiesen, a small hotel near the church, was rescued from ailing obscurity a couple of years ago by an English family who own a house in the village as well. The idea was never to create a fancy boutique retreat, but rather a comfortable, affordable and well-run establishment with a good restaurant, which would appeal to guests and locals in equal measure. And this is what has been achieved, with further attention having been lavished on some of the public areas over the summer - including the creation of a new kitchen for Lisa.

Lisa and her husband, Francesco - a young, enthusiastic, workaholic, Swiss-German couple - provide the heart and soul of this pretty place. She cooks (beautifully) and runs the kitchen; he is the front of house, chauffeur and

general Mr Nice Guy, who is happy to take guests to and from the slopes, the station and neighbouring restaurants should they choose to eat out.

From this you will have established that the Bellevue is not a hugely convenient hotel, but, in many ways, this is part of its charm. Marauding teenagers will not be happy here; neither will adults who like action and nightlife. This is a place for those on a limited budget - even the ski hire is cheaper - who want peace and quiet, good food and great skiing, and who are not averse to taking public transport (which, being Swiss, runs like clockwork).

Ten minutes on the bus, for example, will have you at Rinerhorn, the quiet mountain, so called because, apart from the main cable car, there are only T-bar lifts, making it unpopular with many (snowboarders in particular - hurrah!) and thus delightfully uncrowded. Ten minutes on and you're at Davos Platz, which links into the extensive Davos-Klosters ski area.

Miss that last bus back and man-with-a-van Francesco will come to get you. And how lovely it is, leaving all the hustle and bustle of a snow-bound city behind you, and retreating through a picturesque valley of farms, churches, pine trees and rivers to the Bellevue. True, there's no sauna, hot tub or masseuse to ease out the aching muscles, but the rooms - 21 in total - are extremely comfortable, with underfloor heating, proper beds and bedlinen (never guaranteed in the Alps), and a simple elegance that is easy on the eye. Rooms 4 and 9 are the ones to go for, or insist on a mountain view. A three-course dinner, excellently priced, of course, and based on a menu of predominantly locally sourced, seasonal produce, is the perfect way to wrap up the day ☐

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## WAYS AND MEANS

Pamela Goodman stayed as a guest of Bellevue Wiesen (00-41-81 40 41150; [www.bellevuewiesen.ch](http://www.bellevuewiesen.ch)). Mid-week rates start at CHF129 per room and weekend rates at CHF159 per room, including breakfast. For half-board guests, a set three-course dinner is available for 35CHF per person. Seasonal deals are often available: check the website or contact the hotel. Local buses and trains are included in the cost of a ski pass. For more information, go to [www.davos.ch](http://www.davos.ch).

Bellevue Wiesen is the yellow building next to the church in Davos Wiesen (this picture). Room 4 (left) is one of the best, with views of the valley

