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ADRIAN LOURIE



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**A year-round hit:** Andermatt, now part of central Switzerland's largest linked ski area, where apartments start at about £250,000

## Blue-sky thinking

**D**ESPITE the storms of recent weeks, winter in the European Alps is generally characterised by blue skies, bracing air and snow as far as the eye can see. Last year's record snowfalls brought more winter visitors to the Alps for the first time in four years, but to maintain that increase ski resorts must continue to adapt, says Sophie Chick of Savills World Research. "Successful ski resorts must invest in their infrastructure to improve access to resorts, encourage summer tourism and appeal to millennials who generally are less keen on winter holidays than their parents," she says. But they are very keen on wellness, gyms, spas and outdoor sports.

### LA DOLCE VITA IN ITALY

In the Italian Dolomites the development of the region's first luxury wellness resort is well underway at Lefay Resort & Spa Dolomiti in Pinzolo, a small town with a year-round population of 3,500. Close to the super-smart ski resort of Madonna di Campiglio, the hotel is due to open this summer with 88 hotel suites and 23 freehold Residences priced from £1.3 million alongside some of the best spa and wellness facilities in Europe.

Lefay aims to capitalise on extensive experience from its first resort on Lake Garda which, since opening in 2008, has been showered with prestigious awards. Lefay is owned by the Leali family who have invested £58 million in their Dolomites project.

The spa at Lefay Dolomiti is centre stage, covering four floors and a whopping 53,820 square feet. There will be two heated pools, one indoor-outdoor, a huge fitness centre, sauna and steam zone and an entire floor devoted to treatment rooms. The hotel rooms span two wings on either side of the spa while the Wellness Residences are directly below, easily connected to the spa and providing good views across the village to the rugged Dolomite

peaks. The one- to three-bedroom Residences of 1,290 to 2,800 square feet are comfortable, modern homes, all with balconies and underground parking. Swish kitchens and bathrooms are included, a rarity in Italy, and the optional rental pool has net yields forecasted from 2.4 per cent.

"We aim to be the prime wellness hospitality brand in Europe," says Alcide Leali, managing director of Lefay. "Wellness is so much more than just the spa for us. It's the full holistic experience from the restaurant, the rooms, the service, the setting, even the architecture."

New-build homes are rare in the Italian Alps and these are in a National Park within the Dolomites, a Unesco Heritage Site. Lefay Dolomiti is surrounded by forest at the top of the town, two hours from Verona airport. The Campiglio ski area is the largest in Trentino with 93 miles of slopes and a top height of 8,200 feet.

The Dolomites are a rich independent region of Italy with an excellent infrastructure and a strong snow record. Property prices in Madonna di Campiglio are the highest in the Italian Alps, on a par with Cortina and Courmayeur, but a shortage of top-rate hospitality options meant it lacked wide international appeal,

something Lefay Dolomiti seems set to change.

### ANDERMATT, SWITZERLAND

Wellness facilities, year-round living and an exceptionally good snow record are on offer in Andermatt in Switzerland where a new ski-lift linking Andermatt and Sedrun has created central Switzerland's largest ski area and seen demand and property prices increase.

This is a hugely ambitious project with plans for six four- and five-star hotels and 42 residential buildings housing 490 one, two and three-bedroom flats. Andermatt already has an 18-hole championship golf course.

This winter saw the opening of the Radisson Blu, a 179-room hotel, and linked Gotthard Residences, 100 apartments with full access to the hotel's spa and wellness centre. In addition the Andermatt Reus Holiday Village opened, a central, car-free plaza with shops, bars and restaurants. Gotthard Residences start from £360,000 and elsewhere in the resort apartments start from £250,000.

**Lefay Resort & Spa Dolomiti:** through Savills (savills.com; 020 7016 3740)  
**Andermatt Swiss Alps:** andermatt-swissalps.ch/en



**From £1.3 million:** new one- to three-bedroom flats at Lefay Resort & Spa Dolomiti in Pinzolo in the Italian Alps, with some of the best hotel, spa and wellness facilities in Europe. Through Savills (savills.com)