

Ski resorts selling the lifestyle to Chinese market

By Liz Flora, Jing Daily

Top tourism destinations across the globe are vying for the business of China's booming number of affluent outbound travelers, but one type of luxury world-class destination is still hoping to catch up: the ski resort.

Since the sport requires extensive training and is new to the average Chinese traveler, destinations from Switzerland to Canada are working to take a shortcut to visitor growth numbers by selling the luxury ski lifestyle along with their world-class slopes.

Over the weekend, an inaugural event in Beijing called Ski&Style spotlighted that lifestyle by bringing together top resort representatives from Switzerland, Iceland, France, Canada, and Japan to present their destinations to Chinese VIPs as they sipped Champagne, attended exclusive parties, and viewed a ski style runway show. The aim of the event was to demonstrate that a ski vacation abroad could be worthwhile even for those at the beginner level, which is the case for many of China's skiers.

"In China, ski has been promoted through the angle of the sport. What we wanted to show is that ski before all was a destination, and is a destination," says Delphine Lignières, the CEO of event organizer China Rendez-Vous. "It means that somebody who is not skiing should enjoy the winter lifestyle over there. What we wanted to show as well is that actually, après-ski is the best moment of the day. It's a moment where you mingle with friends; you are enjoying life."

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