

stay

INDIA

▼ **The Khyber Himalayan Resort & Spa, Gulmarg**
Pristine powder and dizzying vertical drops lure serious skiers to the resort town of Gulmarg in Kashmir.

Stay in Style Opened last December, the Khyber has 85 rooms decorated with Kashmiri *namdas* (felted rugs) and embroidered throws. Meals include mutton dumplings and other local specialties.

Mountain High The hotel is steps from a gondola that swoops people up to the highest ski point in the Himalayas, at 13,780 feet. Not a skier? An activities concierge can arrange snowmobile tours or toboggan rides.

Peak Season Ideal skiing time is late December through mid-March. From \$220. 91/(0) 1954-254-666, khyberhotels.com

RUSSIA

► **Swissôtel Krasnaya Polyana, Sochi**
The newest Swissôtel opens by the end of the year, just in time to welcome the world to Sochi for the 2014 Winter Olympics.

Prime Location The 158-room hotel is set in the central square of the Krasnaya Polyana resort's upper village, steps from the ski lifts. The resort will host alpine and nordic Olympic events.

Snow and Sunshine Thanks to the region's unique geography and climate, visitors can ski in the morning and lounge on the beaches of the Black Sea in the afternoon.

Peak Season The Olympics take place February 7-23, 2014, when the snow should be at its best. The ski season runs from December to March. From \$240. (800) 637-9477, swissotel.com



The Caucasus Mountains, above, in Sochi, Russia, await Olympians. The après-ski crowd at the Khyber resort in Gulmarg, India, below, gathers in the hookah lounge, left.



5 TOUR OPERATORS FOR ADVENTUROUS SKIERS

1. ALASKA

Points North Heli-Adventures
Points North is the only heliskiing outfitter with access to the southeastern side of the Chugach Mountains. The lodge, a former cannery just outside the town of Cordova, sits on the edge of Prince William Sound. From \$5,475 for seven days. (877) 787-6784, alaskaheliski.com

2. CANADA

Valhalla Powdercats
It's the Norse word for a warrior's paradise: Valhalla. Ski warriors will love riding the light powder in British Columbia's Valhalla Mountain range. Two snowcats each carry 12 skiers and two guides to play on 21,500 acres of terrain. From \$340. (866) 722-7669, valhallapow.com

3. ICELAND

Arctic Heli Skiing
Guides take skiers to terrain appropriate for their experience level, from extreme couloirs to wide-open glaciers. Arctic Heli Skiing guests stay at a 25-person, classic mid-20th-century farmhouse lodge. From \$7,000 for four days. 354/698-9870, arcticheliskiing.com

4. KYRGYZSTAN

40 Tribes
Explore Kyrgyzstan's remote Tien Shan Mountains with 40 Tribes, an outfitter that partners with local guides. Tours start with a village homestay and continue to a network of yurts. From \$2,160 for four days. (303) 552-6034, 40tribesbackcountry.com

5. NEW ZEALAND

Southern Lakes Heliski
Only guests get to ski the more than 3,000 square miles of terrain over 11 mountain ranges near Wanaka and Queenstown. Packages range from one-day trips to five days of heliskiing from a private yacht on Lake Wakatipu. From \$660. 64/(0) 3-442-6222, heliskinz.com