40 of the best ski holidays for every budget

It's not too late – here are the best options to book this season from luxury resorts in Switzerland to family fun in Whistler

By Chemmy Alcott *and* Sophie Butler, DESTINATION EXPERT

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Different months of the year entice different types of people – of all abilities and tribes – to the slopes | CREDIT: Getty

I am so fortunate to have spent many years chasing snow – both as a Winter Olympian and now as a recreational skier still searching for perfect arcs and chest deep powder – I've learned it pays to have a battle plan. This season in particular procrastinators won't get powder days, brave bookers will.

In January, the snow is almost guaranteed – resorts have a healthy base and off-piste powder days are more frequent. A popular time for long weekends, it is also quiet and a great time to travel with my pre-schoolers. With the slopes being less busy and the snow hard packed and grippy both my sons, Locki and Cooper, have had their happiest times on snow in the first weeks of the year.

February can be carnage. In fact we are expecting the Winter Olympics (starting February 4 2022) to inspire a lot of people to book a last-minute winter holiday, so look for a hidden gem. You don't have to stray too far off the beaten path – just be inventive.

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I love spring skiing. March can be epic, with huge overnight powder and ample sunny days. The mixed conditions adds spice to a ski trip – you could find yourself changing rental skis, from piste carvers, to fat powder planks, to touring equipment, on a daily basis.

I also always recommend that first timers and parents with young children start late in the season – no one wants to be cold when they learn. This year Easter is particularly late, great news for those committed to travelling during school holidays.

Heading into April, long lunches are prime as the days get longer and the seasonaires start letting their hair down. One of my favourite rituals is sunbathing on a high-altitude terrace, with an Aperol Spritz in hand, after a morning shredding up the pistes. It won't be long now, cheers to the best ski season ever.

By Chemmy Alcott

Why ski in each month

January

Quiet pistes, plentiful powder days and low-season prices – there's no better way to start the new year than on the slopes.

February

Avoid the half-term carnage by heading off the beaten track during the busiest month of the season, when the slopes are primed and resorts are buzzing.

March

As the days get longer, holidaymakers can revel in warmer temperatures and bluebird skies – ideal for learning the ropes or spending long lunches on a sun-filled terrace.

April

The end of the season is cause for celebration, with the Easter holidays, lively festivals and revved-upped après-ski making April one of the most exciting times to head to hit the slopes.

The best budget ski holidays

Passo Tonale, Italy

When to go: January

Laid-back Passo Tonale is in the Adamello ski area and is one of the best-value resorts in Italy, with prices at their lowest in January. Crystal Ski (020 8610 3123; crystalski.co.uk) offers the three-star Hotel Eden – a five-minute walk to the ski lift – from £451. Departs January 8, 2022.

La Plagne Bellcote, France

When to go: February (please note, travel to France is currently prohibited)

You can still enjoy the giant Paradiski area without breaking the bank if you travel late in February and opt for self catering. Travelski Express (0800 260 5082; uk.travelski.com) offers a stay at Skissim Select: Résidence Les Glacier, an apartment complex at the foot of the slopes in Plagne Bellecote, from £476, including train fares, transfers and lift pass, based on two sharing a studio apartment. Departs February 26, 2022.

Plagne Centre, Plagne Soleil and Plagne Village are parts of the world's second largest linked ski area called Paradiski | CREDIT: Getty

Soldeu, Andorra

When to go: March

Andorra is famous for offering good-value accommodation – but that doesn't mean compromise in the Grandvalira ski area, linking Soldeu and Pas de la Casa. There is more than 200km of slopes and glorious sunshine in March. Inghams (01483 319513; inghams.co.uk) offers self-catering Residence Andorra Apartments from £489, based on four sharing a one-bedroom apartment. Departs March 20, 2020.

Orelle Val Thorens, France

When to go: April (please note, travel to France is currently prohibited)

A newly-opened ski lift to Cime Caron has speeded up connections between the satellite village of Orelle to neighbouring town of Val Thorens. This makes it a great base for a late season, snow-sure break. Peak Retreats (02392 839310; peakretreats.co.uk) offers self-catering stays at Residence Orelle 3 Vallées from £573, based on an apartment for four people, including Eurotunnel crossing with Flexiplus upgrade. Departs April 2, 2022.

Val Thorens viewed from Cime Caron peak | CREDIT: Getty

The best luxury ski holidays

Andermatt, Switzerland

When to go: January

Recent huge investment has propelled Andermatt from a pretty Swiss village into the top league of luxury resorts. Prices are less sky-high in January when, though chilly, the snow is at its best. Scott Dunn (020 8682 5020; scottdunn.com) offers the five-star Chedi Andermatt, with its own private ice rink, from £2,800 B&B. Departs January 14, 2022.

Andermatt has become one of the top luxury resorts | CREDIT: Getty

Méribel, France

When to go: February (please note, travel to France is currently prohibited)

Avoid the half-term rush by booking an early-February week. That way you can have some of the best slopes of Les Trois Vallées ski area all to yourself. Ski Solutions (020 7471 7761; skisolutions.com) offers stays at Hotel Le Coucou, a new super-stylish, quiet, out-of-resort bolthole, from £3,310, room only. Departs February 5, 2022.

Courchevel, France

When to go: March (please note, travel to France is currently prohibited)

For some, Courchevel is more about posing than skiing and March sunshine can provide a perfect opportunity. It is certainly a resort that knows how to do luxury: the pistes are groomed to perfection and you'll be spoiled with Les Trois Vallées on your doorstep. Elegant Resorts (01244 897581; elegantresorts.co.uk) offers the five-star Aman Le Melezin from £3,945. Departs March 12, 2022.

Courchevel is more about posing than skiing and the pistes are groomed to perfection | CREDIT: Getty

Lech, Austria

When to go: April

Chic and stylish, Lech is one of Austria's loveliest villages and home to some of its most indulgent hotels. Although sitting at a modest altitude, it is a safe bet, with big dumps of snow throughout the season and links to Zurs and St Anton. Ski Solutions (020 7471 7761; skisolutions.com) offers the five-star Hotel Post Lech Arlberg, with large swimming pool and spa, from £2,905, room only. Departs April 2, 2022.

The best ski holidays for experts

Jackson Hole, USA

When to go: January

With its extensive back country and legendary Corbet's Couloir, Jackson Hole in Wyoming is famous for its challenging and spine-tingling off-piste runs, with prime powder conditions in January. With US borders now open, Jackson Hole can be reached via a one-stop flight, with a number of connecting airports including Denver and Dallas, Ski Independence (0131 243 8097; ski-i.com) offers the four-star Wort Hotel, the resort's iconic red-brick inn, from £1,948 B&B. Departs January 28 2022.

Revelstoke, Canada

When to go: February

Take the opportunity to escape the crowded Alps and head to Revelstoke, the only resort that offers cat-skiing, heli-skiing and backcountry skiing as well as a traditional pisted area all from one village base. Frontier Ski (020 8776 8709; frontier-ski.co.uk) offers the Sandman Hotel from £4,979, including a four-night Selkirk Tangiers heli-ski package, full board, equipment and guiding. Departs February 9, 2022.

Revelstoke is the only resort that offers cat-skiing, heli-skiing and backcountry skiing as well as a traditional pisted area all from one village base | CREDIT: Getty

Hokkaido, Japan

When to go: March

Japanese resorts enjoy wonderful powder snow and, with an average of 14m of snowfall a year. Niseko ski resort in Hokkaido gets some of the best, with huge dumps falling all season long. Inside Japan Tours (0117 244 3380; insidejapantours.com) offers an eight-night Niseko Winter Sports tour, including a five-day lift pass with night skiing, from £1,820 twin share. Departs on select dates in March 2022.

Chamonix, France

When to go: April (please note, travel to France is currently prohibited)

Chamonix has a decent pisted area, but it is the huge off-piste terrain that fires up adrenalin-junkies who want to squeeze out the last moments of late-season excitement. British Airways Holidays (0344 493 0787; britishairways.com) offers the four-star Hotel Le Morgane, near the Aiguille du Midi lift, from £1,285 for a seven-night stay, room only. Excludes transfers. Departs April 2, 2022.

Chamonix has a huge off-piste terrain that fires up adrenalin-junkies | CREDIT: Getty

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The best ski holidays for intermediates

Megève, France

When to go: January (please note, travel to France is currently prohibited)

Spread over three mountains, Megève has plenty to keep intermediates happy, but the resort's comparatively low slopes can make it risky too early in the season, so opt for January instead. Peak Retreats (02392 839310; peakretreats.co.uk) offers self-catering Portes de Megève apartments from £2,762, based on two people sharing a one-bedroom apartment for seven nights, including Eurotunnel crossing with Flexiplus upgrade. Departs January 8, 2022.

Megève has plenty to keep intermediates happy, but it's best to visit in January | CREDIT: Getty

Crans Montana, Switzerland

When to go: February

February is still cold enough to keep the sunny south-facing slopes of Crans-Montana nice and crisp – intermediates can gain confidence here. Momentum Ski (020 7371 9111; momentumski.com) offers Hotel Olympic, with a traditional Swiss restaurant on-site, from £895 B&B. Departs February 3, 2022.

Sölden, Austria

When to go: March

Lots of efficiently-linked pistes make up the cruising terrain in Solden and most of it is above 2,000m, so snow conditions remain excellent until the end of the season. Inghams (01483 319450; inghams.co.uk) offers stays at Hotel Solderhof & Residenz Tamara, close to the resort centre, from £1,049. Departs March 26, 2022.

Snow conditions remain excellent in Sölden until the end of the season | CREDIT: Getty

Avoriaz, France

When to go: April (please note, travel to France is currently prohibited)

At a reliably snowy 1,800m, Avoriaz is at the heart of the Portes du Soleil in the Alps, which offers a huge range of runs and touring routes across a string of smaller French and Swiss resorts. Ski Independence (0131 243 8097; ski-i.com) offers stays at Residence L'Amara from £1,511 – self-catering and based on a two-bedroom apartment sleeping four. Departs April 2, 2022.

The best ski holidays for beginners

El Tarter, Andorra

When to go: January

With easy access to the slopes and plenty of wide, gentle green runs, plus a highly-rated English-speaking ski school, El Tarter in January ticks all the boxes for beginners. Neilson (0333 014 3351; neilson.co.uk) offers stays at the Chalet Hotel Casale, a 19-room barn conversion, from £499. Departs January 9, 2022.

Morzine, France

When to go: February (please note, travel to France is currently prohibited)

Morzine's main area of green slopes is served by a slow-moving, beginner-friendly "magic carpet" conveyor belt. The resort is quick to get to from Geneva, but it is low, so come in February. Crystal Ski (crystalski.co.uk) offers Hotel Sporting, five minutes' walk to Pleney gondola, from £1,005 half-board. Departs February 26, 2022.

Morzine's main area of green slopes is ideal for beginners and the town is charming | CREDIT: Morzine Tourism

Flaine, France

When to go: March (please note, travel to France is currently prohibited)

With free lifts for beginners and nursery slopes situated next to purpose-built accommodation, Flaine is a great choice for those first, nervy turns. Erna Low (020 7584 2841; ernalow.co.uk) offers self catering at Le Centaure, from £1,257 based on two sharing a one-bedroom apartment, including Eurotunnel crossing. Departs March 12, 2022.

Cervinia, Italy

When to go: April

Snow-sure, resort-level green pistes make Cervinia a great choice for novices, with plenty of longer runs above Plan Maison for quick learners to progress to. Ski Line (020 8313 3999; skiline.co.uk) offers stays at Breuil Hotel, beside the nursery slopes, from £1,078. Departs April 3 2022.

Snow-sure, resort-level green pistes make Cervinia a great choice for novices | CREDIT: Getty

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The best chalet ski holidays

La Tania, France

When to go: January (please note, travel to France is currently prohibited)

La Tania – in the pine forest at the foot of the Courchevel ski area – is one of the prettiest, quietest resorts in Les Trois Vallées and has some excellent chalet accommodation for groups wanting an off-peak break. Le Ski (01484 548996; leski.com) offers Chalet Petit Marmau, sleeping four, from £1,110. Departs January 9 2022.

La Tania is one of the prettiest, quietest resorts in Les Trois Vallées and has some excellent chalet accommodation for groups | CREDIT: Getty

Selva, Italy

When to go: February

Sëlva sums up all that is civilised about skiing in Italy: lots of cruising pistes, a good sunshine record and charming chalets. But most slopes are between 1,500m and 2,000m (4,900ft and 6,500ft) so you need to come in

February for optimal conditions. Ski Total by Inghams (01483 319653; inghams.co.uk) offers stays at Chalet Soldanella from £1,159. Departs February 26, 2022.

Baqueira Beret, Spain

When to go: March

Spain might not be the first place you'd look for chalet accommodation, but you can find great options in Baqueira, a resort up at 1,800m in the Val d'Aran in the northern Pyrenees – where skiing and sunbathing collide. Ski Miquel (01457 821200; skimiquel.co.uk) has the 11-room Chalet Salana from £625. Departs March 20, 2022.

Baqueira is located 1,800m in the Val d'Aran in the northern Pyrenees | CREDIT: Getty

Val d'Isère, France

When to go: April (please note, travel to France is currently prohibited)

Val d'Isère has arguably the best late-season snow in the Alps, access to a huge ski area and an excellent choice of chalets. Ski Beat (01273 855100; skibeat.co.uk) offers stays at Chalet Cristal 2, sleeping nine, from £1,279. Departs April 9, 2022.

The best ski holidays for families

Champoluc, Italy

When to go: January

Families with pre-schoolers can enjoy the quiet slopes in beginner-friendly Champoluc, part of the vast Monterosa ski area. Family operators offer some of their best prices this month too. Esprit Ski (01483 944516; espritski.com) offers Chalet Hotel De Champoluc, which includes a nanny service and children's clubs, from £499. Departs January 23, 2022.

Whistler, Canada

When to go: February

There are no half-term holidays in Canada, so if you don't mind the longer flight, it is a great way to avoid the crush and peak prices of Europe. Crystal Ski (020 8610 3123; crystalski.co.uk) offers stays at the Listel Hotel, a family-friendly three star in Whistler, from £1,403, room only. Departs February 8, 2022.

With no half-term holiday in Canada, a ski holiday there is a great way to avoid the peak prices of Europe | CREDIT: Getty

Puy St Vincent, France

When to go: March (please note, travel to France is currently prohibited)

Booking with a family-focused operator is a good way to introduce children to fun in the snow. Snowbizz (01778 341455; snowbizz.co.uk) offers self-catering apartments at Sun Vallée in Puy-Saint-Vincent, adjacent to its nursery and ski school, from £629. Departs March 13, 2022.

Trysil, Norway

When to go: April

Warmer temperatures make April the best time to visit Trysil – Norway's biggest ski area – plus there's a chance of seeing the northern lights. Ski Norway (0207 199 6015; ski-scandinavia.co.uk) offers stays at the Radisson Blu Mountain Resort & Residences in Trysil, with complimentary childcare, from £1,438 B&B. Departing April 3, 2022.

Warmer temperatures make April the best time to visit Trysil | CREDIT: Getty

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The best ski holidays for non-skiers

Quebec, Canada

When to go: January

It doesn't get much snowier than the icy wilderness of north-eastern Canada in January. From a remote lodge at Pourvoirie Cap au Leste, you can enjoy a week of snowshoeing, snowmobiling and dogsledding. KE Adventure Travel (01768 773966; keadventure.com) offers a Quebec Winter Adventure from £2,285 including most meals. Departs January 14, 21 and 28, 2022.

The Quebec Winter Adventure includes a trip to the city | CREDIT: Moment RF

High Tatras, Slovakia

When to go: February

Peak-season skiing is expensive and busy, so instead opt for night sledging, snowshoeing and ice skating – some of the highlights of a week in the traditional Slovakian mountain village of Tatranska Lomnica. Explore (01252 240 506; explore.co.uk) offers a Slovakia Winter Adventure from £1,295 B&B. Departs February 19 2022.

Hindsæter, Norway

When to go: March

Temperatures are edging up in March, making it ideal for some serious hiking through the mountainous region of Hindsæter, with spectacular trails through frozen ice canyons. Inntravel (inntravel.co.uk) offers stays at the three-star Hindsæter Hotel from £1,345 full board. Departs March 6, 2022.

It's possible to extend your break in Norway with extra nights in Oslo | CREDIT: Moment RF

Oulanka National Park, Finland

When to go: April

By April, the choice of snow-based tours in Europe is limited, but Oulanka National Park, a vast rugged wilderness straddling Finland's border with Russia, still offers a range of activities, including dog-sledding and ice climbing. Exodus Travels (020 3553 1643; exodus.co.uk) offers stays at Basecamp Oulanka from £1,799, including most meals. Departs April 3, 10 and 17, 2022.

The details

Prices are per person based on a seven-night stay including half board, flights and transfers, unless stated otherwise, and are subject to availability. For families, prices are per person, based on a family of four. All holidays listed are packages with tour operators and have better legal protection than accommodation booked independently if the pandemic proves a problem in winter. All countries listed, excluding France, are currently open to vaccinated British travellers travelling with unvaccinated children. Always check the latest travel advice before booking, including testing requirements in your destination – travel to France is currently prohibited, but restrictions are under constant review.

This article has been updated for skiing in winter and spring 2022.

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