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24 best ski trips to book this winter

Want to find the most fabulous new chalet in Val d'Isère? The deepest snow in Japan or a bargain family break? Our expert knows the most exciting ski holidays to book this season

Grand Targhee in Wyoming should get incredible snow this winter

SAM NEGEN

Sean Newsom, Contributor | Thursday October 31 2024, 9.00am, The Times

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Why on earth do we go skiing? After all, it's cold, it's wet, it's expensive and — potentially — it's dangerous too. Yet here we all are aquiver again at the prospect of the coming season, and the reason why is simple. Ski holidays are the perfect antidote to a British winter.

If you've ever chafed against winter's sloth, or its greyness, or its lack of daylight; if you hate being cooped up indoors on a damp Sunday afternoon, scrolling fruitlessly for a film you haven't yet watched on Netflix; if you long for a bit more adventure than a welly walk to the nearest pub ... then a week in the mountains, bombing about in the sunlight, is a kind of medicine. It'll shake you out of your inertia, re-energise your listless limbs and light your way towards spring. And if you've got any sense (as well as time and available funds), you'll squeeze in an extra weekend on top of a full skiing week.

Many of you by now will have already booked your trips. But if you haven't, and you're wondering what's still available, you've come to the right place. Admittedly, traditional catered chalets over New Year or February half-term — especially ones that are part of a flights-inclusive package — are rarer than hen's teeth. But there's still a mouth-watering array of other options. I will, for example, be jealous of anyone who skis powder in Grand Targhee, Wyoming, this winter, or who catches a train through the Alps to St Anton am Arlberg, or who celebrates Christmas with the help of the cake and millefeuilles counter at Club Med La Rosière. And if your budget will only stretch as far as a £211 short break in Borovets, well, what are you waiting for? Often when I pull my wellies on for a squelchy family walk in Epping Forest that's where my memory takes me. It sure beats thinking about what movie to watch when we get back home.

All prices are based on two people sharing, unless otherwise stated. Where I've described a specific week of the season — such as Christmas, half-term or Tomorrowland Winter in Alpe d'Huez — the holiday price is for that week.

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France

1. Intermediate-friendly slopes in Tignes

The newly refurbished Chalet Isabelle sleeps ten

MARCBERENGUER.COM

Tignes is a fantastic varied resort, and its high, U-shaped valley comes into its own at the back end of the season, when sunnier slopes in the lower resorts can turn to slush-pits by lunchtime. The bright, freshly refurbished Chalet Isabelle (which sleeps ten) gives you instant access to it via the Paquis and Chaudanne chairlifts, allowing you to ski broad, intermediate-friendly pistes on both sides of the valley before migrating up to Grande Motte glacier in the afternoon. It also comes as part of an Atol-bonded, flights-inclusive package. These days, that's a rarity.

Details Seven nights' half-board from £1,339pp, including flights (skivertigo.co.uk)

2. Affordable luxury in La Toussuire

OVO Network

Chalet Temaïa has a large lounge that's perfect for slumping in after a morning on the slopes

Want to live like a gazillionaire in a big French ski area? It needn't actually cost a bomb, if you plug into the OVO Network's ski chalets, which are stylish with

luxury touches, but come in cheaper because they're offered without flight packages and in-house catering. Take Chalet Temaïa in La Toussuire for example. With its own indoor pool and cinema room, as well as a giant, slouchy lounge, it is properly posh – and it sits in an underrated, 193-mile network of intermediate-friendly pistes. Sure, La Toussuire isn't Courchevel, but with nine luxury-loving friends beside you, you'll create all the buzz you need.
Details Seven nights' self-catering for ten from £10,080 (ovonetwork.com). Fly to Chambéry

- 10 of the best ski chalets in France

3. White Christmas in La Rosière

There are three buffets a day at Club Med La Rosière

Christmas is a canny week for a family ski trip. Not only is it cheaper than new year or February half-term, it's much quieter on the slopes too. At least it is until Boxing Day, when the rest of Europe shows up. What's more, if you book Club Med La Rosière the feasting will continue for the whole week, thanks to its endless, thrice-daily buffets. They're part of a package that includes kids' clubs, lift passes and all-day ski lessons that start on the piste, right beside the hotel's boot room.
Details Seven nights' all-inclusive from £2,669pp, including flights (clubmed.co.uk)

Book a stay

4. Easy access skiing at St Gervais les Bains

MAISON DE SAINT-GERVAIS

St Gervais has easy access to the extensive Evasion Mont Blanc ski area

This season, thanks to the new Valléen gondola, you can rise straight from the platform of Le Fayet's train station to St Gervais – and from there, into the extensive, intermediate-friendly Evasion Mont Blanc ski area. There are no rail-inclusive holiday packages available, but London to Paris fares start from £101pp return (eurostar.com) and Paris to Le Fayet fares start from £86pp return (oui.sncf). In St Gervais, basic but super-convenient apartments are available in the Residence le Grand Panorama, next to both the mountain and the Valléen lift.

Details Seven nights' self-catering for four from £166pp (vacansoleil.co.uk)

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5. New lifts in Val d'Isère

The Cocorico bar is great for partying when you're not on the slopes

Val d'Isère's full-throttle reputation is thoroughly deserved. One stomach-in-your-mouth descent of its signature piste, the black-rated Face run, will show you that. But it is also home to lots of fun, high-altitude greens, blues and reds. And thanks to the new Vallon gondola in the easy-skiing Le Fornet sector, they have just become more accessible too. So grab nine friends, book the stylish chalet Arosa, which is new this winter from Ski France and has full-height glass doors leading onto a slope-view balcony, and at whatever level you're skiing make the Cocorico bar your rallying point. Here, the partying is as feisty as the slopes.

Details Seven nights' self-catering for ten from £799pp (skifrance-premium.co.uk)

6. Take a ski safari in the Haute-Maurienne

Bring a car. The six-day, Haute-Maurienne Vanoise ski pass serves not just Val Cenis. You get a day's skiing in five other local resorts too. So as well as bombing down the long, local, north-facing slopes, you can day-trip up to Bonneval sur Arc to try ski-touring or learn the basics of cross-country skiing in Bessans. Val Cenis is also a great destination for families. Book the affordable Chalets de Flambeau apartments and you'll be close to the ESF ski school, where half-term group lessons can be 45 per cent cheaper than in Méribel (ski-school-valcenis.co.uk).

Details Seven nights' self-catering for four from £340pp, including Eurotunnel crossing (peakretreats.co.uk)

7. Bargain UCPA week for 18-30s in Flaine

Flaine will be taken over by 18-30-years-olds ready for a party

The UCPA is France’s miraculous sport-for-all organisation, offering week-long ski holidays that include lessons, lift passes and ski hire for the same price as a couple of nights’ B&B in some four-star hotels. This March 1-8 week in its refurbished Flaine centre is part of its 18-30 takeover programme. So skiers will be plunged into a ready-made party (even if drinks are the one extra you have to pay for). There are lessons on offer for every level of skier. But beginners and intermediates especially will enjoy Flaine’s snowy mountain bowl.
Details Seven nights’ full board from £671pp (action-outdoors.co.uk). Fly to Geneva

8. Go by rail to intermediates’ paradise Les Arcs

La Cachette is reachable by train for a more sustainable ski season

MANU REYBOZ

Nothing makes your ski holiday more sustainable than taking the train. And the smoothest rail journey in the Alps is the one that uses Eurostar’s ski train, which runs weekly from St Pancras to Bourg-St Maurice between December 21 and March 1. From here, the funicular whizzes you up to Arc 1600, where it’s a short walk to the kooky, recently refurbished La Cachette hotel with its simple rooms and slopeside café. The sense of convenience continues the next morning. The nearest ski lift whisks you to the top of the best upper-intermediate piste in the whole 450km Paradiski area, also called Cachette.
Details: Seven nights’ half-board, including train, from £1,894pp (inghams.co.uk)

- 20 of the best ski resorts in Europe for 2024

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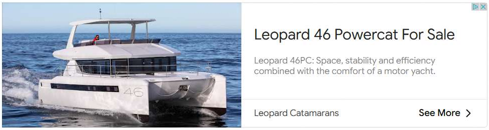

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10. Dance music festival in Alpe d’Huez

Tomorrowland Winter is at Alpe d'Huez in March 2025

If you've ever danced like a whirling dervish at the top of a mountain and thought, "Never mind the skiing, it's the après that I love," then Tomorrowland Winter is waiting for you. Running from March 15-22 in Alpe d'Huez, this dance festival attracts 22,000 revellers every year, and as well as four nights of main-stage DJ sets, it lays on parties at seven other venues, both indoors and out. The festival pass costs £579pp (winter.tomorrowland.com), which includes ski passes, and if you base yourself at the Chalet Secret de Neige you'll be close not just to the stage but also to key lifts up the mountain. Just in case you've got time for a bit of skiing too.

Details Seven nights' chalet-board from £1,449pp, including flights (inghams.co.uk)

- 13 best ski resorts in France for your next trip to the slopes

Italy

11. All-terrain skiing in Cervinia

Visit Cervinia to learn the “correct” way to ski

GETTY IMAGES

This winter, the British ski school Snoworks brings its mind-expanding, myth-busting lessons to Cervinia for the first time — with a five-day all-terrain course from March 24 (from £795pp; snoworks.co.uk). Based in the Petit Palais hotel, a short walk from the key Plan Maison lifts, it wants to teach a “correct” way to ski, whether on-piste or off. It will equip clients with an adaptable mindset and a toolbox of skills to cope with any slope. The aim is not to be stylish, but safe, resourceful and stable.

Details Seven nights’ half-board from £819pp, including flights (crystalski.co.uk)

Book a stay

12. Heli-skiing in Alagna

Alagna’s off-piste skiing varies from mild to very steep

JAMES ORR/HELI-SKI

The key to a successful heli-trip is to have some bad-weather back-up, in case it’s too windy for your chopper to fly. Alagna has plenty of that. Its off-piste terrain ranges from the mild to the mind-bogglingly steep, and on this four-day Heli Intro package you’ll have a local guide whatever the conditions. As well as accommodation in the cute Tre Alberi Liberi the price also includes two heli-drops, on a wide variety of slopes. Expect a proper sense of adventure from every one of them.

Details Four nights’ B&B from £1,875pp (heliski.co.uk). Fly to Milan

13. Steep pistes and sparkling wine in Madonna di Campiglio

Five black slopes have made Campiglio famous

Anyone fancy a glass of Trentodoc Spumante, the rich, full-bodied sparkling wine made in the Adige valley? It is the aperitivo of choice in the upmarket Madonna di Campiglio, and after a day on its scintillatingly steep pistes, you may need a sip or two to steady your nerves. There are plenty of easier slopes to tackle here too, but it's the suite of five blacks that have made Campiglio famous, especially the 3-Tre World Cup slalom slope, which threatens to pitch you straight into the middle of town if you lose an edge. Book the cute and central Alpen Hotel Vidi so you won't have far to hobble in case.
Details Seven nights' half-board from £1,027pp, including flights (igluski.com)

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Book a stay

14. Easy skiing and long lunches in San Cassiano

The easy pistes on the Pralongià plateau make for laid-back skiing
ALEX MOLING

No one ever tires of looking at the crinkle-cut cliffs and crags of the Dolomites. Which makes the rooftop swimming pool at the chic, imaginative Hotel Fanes particularly delicious. So too the rotating outdoor sauna. Both are part of the hotel's extensive wellness facilities and offer the perfect end to a serene day spent skiing the easy pistes on the Pralongià plateau. Lunch at the gastronomic Utia Bioch mountain restaurant on dumpling soup, pasta and fine wines (mains from £15.50; bioch.it).
Details Half-board doubles from £1,998pp, including flights (inghams.co.uk)

Austria

15. Family-friendly fun in Galtür

Galtür has a small ski area perfect for families

Galtür is the kind of Alpine village many parents hope for when they book their family's ski holiday — but rarely find. Clustered around a church spire and set beneath a spectacular, pyramid-shaped peak, it has a public pool, a climbing wall and a bowling alley — as well as charming family hotels such as the four-star superior Rössle. The small, snowy ski area is a short shuttle bus ride away, its family-friendly appeal deepened by a suite of fun slopes that includes a dual-slalom race course.
Details Seven nights' half-board from £1,001pp including flights and transfers (crystalski.co.uk)

Book a stay

16. A classic ski holiday in Sölden

Here's proof of Sölden's cold-weather credentials. Each winter, its Rettenbach glacier hosts the opening races of the Ski World Cup, long before most resorts have a flake of snow on their pistes. Up high, you can look forward to broad, ego-boosting pistes and a gastronomic tapas tasting menu at the Ice Q restaurant at 3,048m (£48, iceq.at). Then, as you head downhill, the resort's après-ski scene is sure to warm you up. Stay in the modern Die Berge hotel, near key bars such as Fire & Ice, so you can keep the party going long after dark.
Details Seven nights' B&B from £1,045pp, including flights (crystalski.co.uk)

17. Take the train to St Anton

It's not just French ski resorts that can be reached in a day by train. Austrian A-lister St Anton am Arlberg has a mainline station, and the journey from London takes between 11 and 15 hours. It's a blast too, whether you're hurtling on a TGV through France or winding up into the steep and snowy Arlberg (returns from £298pp; thetrainline.com). Book the four-star Andino to be near the station, the ski lifts and the meeting point for the inspiring Piste to Powder ski school (three days' tuition from £341pp; pistetopowder.com). And you'll be near the nightlife at the MooserWirt bar.
Details B&B doubles from £225 (andinohotel.at). Take the train to St Anton

Book a stay

Switzerland

18. Join the chef Marcus Wareing for a mountain feast in Andermatt

A midwinter mountain feast awaits on this January 9-11 weekend. Based in one of the Alps' most opulent hotels, the Chedi Andermatt, it includes two meals hosted by the *MasterChef* judge Marcus Wareing. The first is in the Chedi's highly rated restaurant — home to a magnificent glass-walled cheese larder. The second is lunch at the Michelin-starred Gütsch by Markus Neff. Wareing will chat about his life and work while you decide where to ski on Sunday: on the easy slopes of the Oberalp Pass or down one of the thrilling off-piste descents of the Gemsstock mountain.
Details Two nights' B&B from £2,950pp (momentumxp.co.uk)

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19. Spring skiing and music in Zermatt

HOTEL RESTAURAN
RIFFELHAUS 1853

Zermatt Unplugged has seen Kate Nash and Lionel Richie grace its stage

HANNA BUEKER ATANCE FOR ZERMATT UNPLUGGED

Music festivals don't need to be big to be successful. Since 2007 Zermatt Unplugged has featured James Morrison, Norah Jones, Ben Howard and Lionel Richie, among others. But the main marquee seats just 2,300 people and there are smaller breakout-act and mountain venues too. This year Kate Nash serenaded concertgoers on a funicular train (zermatt-unplugged.ch). The artists for the 2025 edition, from April 8-12, will be announced in December. If you want to ski as well as dance, book the Hotel Alpenblick Superior. It's near the lifts to Zermatt's most snow-sure slopes for spring skiing.
Details Seven nights' B&B from £1,788pp, including flights (heidi.com)

Scandinavia

20. Ski the Arctic in Narvik, Norway

The Narvikfjellet ski area is vast and perfect for off-piste and ski touring

This season's most intriguing short break is to Narvik. Imagine. On an average Saturday morning you would be getting the shopping in at Tesco. But here you are, far beyond the Arctic circle, making fast, fluent turns on the Narvikfjellet ski area, with the sparkling waters of the Ofotfjord below and the shapely Lofoten Islands beyond. The local ski area is small, but its lift system unlocks a vast area of off-piste and ski touring terrain. So book your digs at the sleek new Basecamp Narvik apart-hotel to be near the lifts, and save some energy for aurora borealis-spotting after dark.
Details Four nights' self-catering for two from £825pp, including flights (skisafari.com)

21. Easy family skiing in Stoten, Sweden

Ski Scandinavia runs kids' ski lessons at Stoten

Is this the world's shortest ski transfer? From the remote Scandinavian Mountains airport, 280 miles north of Gothenburg, drive time to the beginner-friendly resort of Stoten is 20 minutes. Here, Norway and Sweden specialist Ski Scandinavia runs exclusive kids' ski lessons for their clients, which last three hours rather than the Swedish norm of 90 minutes (five days' tuition from £265pp). What's more, it still has availability for the sought-after February half-term week, with the ski-in, ski-out Stoten Mitt apartments close to both restaurants and pistes.
Details Seven nights' self-catering for four from £1,536pp, including flights (ski-scandinavia.co.uk)

Bulgaria

22. Exciting pistes and appealing prices in Borovets

Borovets is both affordable and thrillingly steep

Everyone thinks the affordable resorts of Bulgaria are best skied by beginners. But head to Borovets and you'll discover not just appealing prices (a pint costs just over £1), but some thrillingly steep, straight-down-the-mountain descents. You'll find just the right number of them for a four-night break, based at the bargain-basement Villa Park apartments, provided you book lessons with one of Borovets' hard-working instructors (three days' tuition from £79pp; ski-school-borovets.com). After three days following in their fast and fearless tracks you'll think you're Mikaela Shiffrin.
Details Four nights' self-catering for four from £211pp, including flights (heidi.com)

Andorra

23. Fun pistes and low prices at El Tarter

Chalet Casale

Neilson's stone-walled chalet-hotel Casale

STRIKINGFACES

Remember when low-season weeks in a catered chalet or chalet hotel came in for less than £600, including flights and transfers? At Neilson's stone-walled chalet-hotel Casale they still do, in early January (or they did at the time of writing). The company's Mountain Experts programme guarantees two guided outings per week with qualified ski instructors. Not only will they introduce you to the ski area's impressive 130-mile collection of confidence-boosting pistes, but they'll also give you tips on your technique. Rooms at the hotel are light and simple.
Details Seven nights' half-board from £599pp, including flights and transfers (neilson.co.uk)

Book a stay

Japan

24. Hit the deep snow on the islands

La Niña is brewing in the Pacific, meaning snows in Niseko will be excellent

Demand for Japan's snowy slopes is sky-high this winter, not least because an episode of the climate anomaly La Niña is brewing in the Pacific. She's El Niño's

episode of the climate anomaly La Niña is brewing in the Pacific. She's El Niño's colder sister and may bring even more light, fluffy powder than usual to the islands of Honshu and Hokkaido. This bespoke February itinerary (which includes lift passes, bullet trains and internal flights) picks out two plums from what's left: the Hinode Hills resort near Niseko and the Lotte Arai resort on Honshu. Expect memorable meals — soba noodles, sushi, steaming bowls of soup curry — and at Arai, a sizeable, avalanche-controlled freeriding zone.
Details Twelve nights' B&B from £4,445pp, including flights, lift pass and transport (differentsnow.com)

US

25. Build powder confidence at Grand Targhee, Wyoming

Grand Targhee is on the western edge of the Teton mountain range
SAM NEGEN

Like Japan, America's northern Rockies are hoping for extra snow from this winter's La Niña. If it comes, Grand Targhee, on the western edge of the Teton mountain range, should get a face-full. What's more, its gentle slopes are the perfect place for Brits to build their powder-skiing confidence, weaving between the ice-encrusted trees (aka snow ghosts), before they cross the mountains to tackle the plunging terrain at Jackson Hole. This tailor-made package includes four nights in the Targhee Lodge and three nights in the Mountain Modern hotel in Jackson Hole.
Details Seven nights' room-only from £2,429pp, including flights (skisafari.com)

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Peak Retreats

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Owen JAMES
1 NOVEMBER, 2024

Delighted to see the place I found last season that provides glorious conditions, a return to consideration for others on the slopes, few waiting times and pure pleasure, does not appear in the article.

Reply · ☆ Recommended (0) · Share

T Ashley
1 NOVEMBER, 2024

Totally agree. And half the places listed above won't have enough snow for enough of the season to be a safe bet.

Reply · ☆ Recommended (0) · Share

John Grimley
2 NOVEMBER, 2024

If you're going to go all that way, there are better places than Grand Targhee.
It's OK for a day excursion from your neighbouring base, but a week there? I don't think so.

Reply · ☆ Recommended (0) · Share

Martin Booth
2 NOVEMBER, 2024

I've never been skiing, as always I love how the comments always show just how poorly researched these articles are.

If it's listed in any xxxx best xxxx to book articles in the times, then do the opposite and you won't go far wrong.

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