

Super smart chalets with luxury price tags in some of the world's top resorts. Superior slopes and plentiful powder guaranteed

Snow sanctuaries



Chalet Le Rocher, Val d'Isere, France

WHY WE LOVE IT >>

Le Rocher is one of an elite group of chalets found in the peaceful area of Les Fermes de Val d'Isere. Nestled at the top of private road, it's a safe haven for up to 14 guests, guaranteeing undisturbed tranquility and breathtaking views of the snowy Isère valley. Loved by us for its intricately carved furnishings, made with rustic, reclaimed wood, and heavy sprinkling of twinkling chandeliers (you'll find one in nearly every nook and cranny), it boasts both cosy, traditional good looks and contemporary charm.

Downstairs, you'll discover a spacious living area, complete with a full DVD/Blu-Ray library, chic cowhide sofas and an open fireplace, while upstairs you'll find seven Alpine-style bedrooms, each equipped with an en-suite bathroom and flatscreen TV. The wooden wonder is also decked out with outdoor heated steps to park your bum on, an indoor swimming pool and massage parlour, a grand piano and fully-stocked bar and a bubbling hot tub out on the balcony.

THE RESORT >>

Val d'Isere is one of the most famous ski resorts in the world and those who won't go anywhere else (including a raft of A-list regulars) know why. Thanks to its snow-sure slopes, which reach an altitude of nearly 3,400 metres, and renowned ski schools, the resort is a paradise for both

professionals and beginners. Those longing for a lazy, relaxed break will be pleased to know that the chalet is only a short stroll (or a minute's chauffeured drive) from the resort's main lifts.

BOOK >>

Prices start from £21,950 for 7 nights, including full gourmet catering, including daily afternoon tea, champagne and canapés, and in-resort driver service.

For more information, visit www.ultimateluxurychalets.com



Chalet Chouqui, Verbier, Switzerland

WHY WE LOVE IT >>

The newly-built Chalet Chouqui is the ultimate getaway for big families and groups of friends looking to celebrate and get stuck into 2016's ski season. It comprises two interconnecting chalets, sleeping 18 to 20, and offers uninterrupted views of Mont Blanc Massif - the highest mountain in the Alps. Venture inside to discover 1,000 square-metres of James Bond-like luxury; two sitting rooms, nine en-suite bedrooms and a list full of jaw-dropping extras. Our favourite features are the cinema room, the fully-stocked wine cellar, the 15-metre indoor swimming pool (the largest in Verbier) and the outdoor terrace, which is packed with more than 20 sofas and sun loungers, a BBQ and fire pit and possibly the world's most glorious hot tub. Perfect for alfresco dining and taking in the

views among the snowflakes. The chalet is managed by nine dedicated staff members, including two professional chefs who are on hand to provide daily brekkie, afternoon tea, pre-dinner drinks and canapés and four-course dinners. Oh, and did we mention that all drinks and champagne are included?

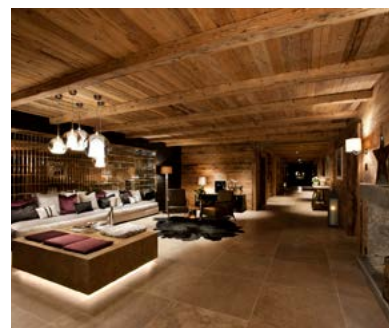
THE RESORT >>

With its legendary ski terrain, spectacular mountain scenery and high-octane nightlife, it's easy to see why Verbier is one of the world's most famous ski resorts. Perched high above the Val de Bagnes on a dramatic south-facing plateau, the resort has played host to skiers of all abilities for generations and, today, is home to a thriving year-round community. Its nightlife isn't half bad either; sip on cocktails at its popular après ski bars, or dig-in at its handful of Michelin-starred restaurants.

BOOK >>

Prices start from £1,500 per person for the first week of the season (December 12-19) and £2,333 per person per week in January, based on 18 people sharing. Includes all meals, a 24-hour in-resort chauffeur service and in-chalet ski equipment fitting.

For more information, visit www.skiverbiereexclusive.com



Chalet Carl, Lech, Austria

WHY WE LOVE IT >>

Masculine by name but certainly not by

nature, Chalet Carl is every woman's dream, with its fully-equipped spa, underground beauty salon and treatment rooms and soft, sumptuous furnishings on every floor. More like a mountainside mansion than a ski lodge, the chalet, which sleeps up to 22 people, is located above the city of Lech (one of Austria's most fashionable resorts), at the foot of ski hills.

Head upstairs and you'll find seven bedrooms, each with a private lounge, en-suite bathroom and balcony, where you can soak in a deliciously deep roll top bath (our favourite) and enjoy the very Instagram-worthy view of the surrounding mountains. For those who fancy bathing quite literally in the snow, there are also two monster-size jacuzzis on offer out on the terrace to enjoy. The pièce de résistance, however, has to be what lies beneath. Make your way down to the first basement for first-class pampering in the spa (you'll find everything from saunas and steam rooms to frozen baths and ice fountains), a bit of warming up in the state-of-the-art gym and a few lengths in the tranquil spa pool.

We advise you end your evenings in the second basement, snuggled up in the movie theatre with the kids, or toasting to your trip in the wine cellar.

THE RESORT >>

The town of Lech may be small, but come winter, it sure is mighty. Buried in the heart of the Austrian Alps, it's now considered one of Central Europe's most prized and elite ski resorts, as well as a great spot for those longing for smooth, sunny and treeless slopes. It's also well suited to beginners and intermediates, thanks to plenty of nursery slopes and the famous White Ring ski circuit.

BOOK >>

Prices start from £2,758 per room per night. Includes airport transfers by limousine, all meals, ski passes and equipment, welcome massages, underground parking and chauffeur service.

For more information, visit www.leccollectionist.com



>> Chalet Le Rocher, Val d'Isere



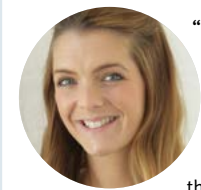
>> Chalet Chouqui, Verbier



>> Chalet Carl, Lech



SKI AND BE SEEN >>



"For skiing, you can't beat the French resort of Chamonix-Mont-Blanc. We always stay at the Hermitage which has stunning views over Mont-Blanc, Le Brevent and the peaks of the Aiguilles de Chamonix. Chamonix's three valleys provide great skiing for all abilities while the town's many bars and hotels provide a great choice of après-ski. I first went with my family 10 years ago and we make our annual trip each year, although our group has now extended to include friends and partners, too."

Laura Simpson, brand development manager at The Lakes Distillery HQ, Gosforth



"Zermatt in Switzerland is my go-to resort. You'll find three of the top 10 mountain restaurants there, including Chez Vrony where you'll receive a warm and friendly welcome and superb food and wine. A bottle of Dezaley goes

down beautifully with their homemade cheese, meats and angel hair pasta with truffle. For après-ski delights, Cuckoo Club is a personal family favourite. Behind it is Grampis, an Italian eatery with a very long waiting list and one that's best done on an evening designated to shopping in the village."

Varsha Sehgal, jewellery designer, Jesmond



"As a relative late-comer to skiing, only having done it for the last 12 years or so, for me it has as much to do with the perceived glamour of a ski holiday as it does with the thrill-seeking challenges of the

pistes. My location of choice is Cortina in Italy. Its sheer beauty, effortless elegance and charm of its people and its unrivalled status as the jewel of the Dolomite mountain range all make it pretty hard to match. To really live the dream so to say, we rent a chalet on the Via dello Stadio, five minutes' walk (even in ski boots!) from the village centre."

Tom Hedley, managing director of Newcastle-based creative agency, Hedley McEwan



"For the past 15 years I have skied with a large but somewhat diminishing group in Courchevel with my daughters, their friends from school at Newcastle High School for Girls and their

respective parents. It has become as much a social event as a sporting one, especially now that the girls have left home and the effect of middle age indulgences has placed too much strain on aging joints. We stay at a Chalet Hotel called The St Louis - it used to provide the best value skiing experience in the Courchevel Valley. For me, one of the main reasons I loved skiing was for the thrill of the wind through my hair, but then my hair disappeared and I started wearing a helmet. In one phrase - in so many ways, skiing makes you feel on top of the world."

Gordon Brown, head of commercial property at Gordon Brown Law Firm