

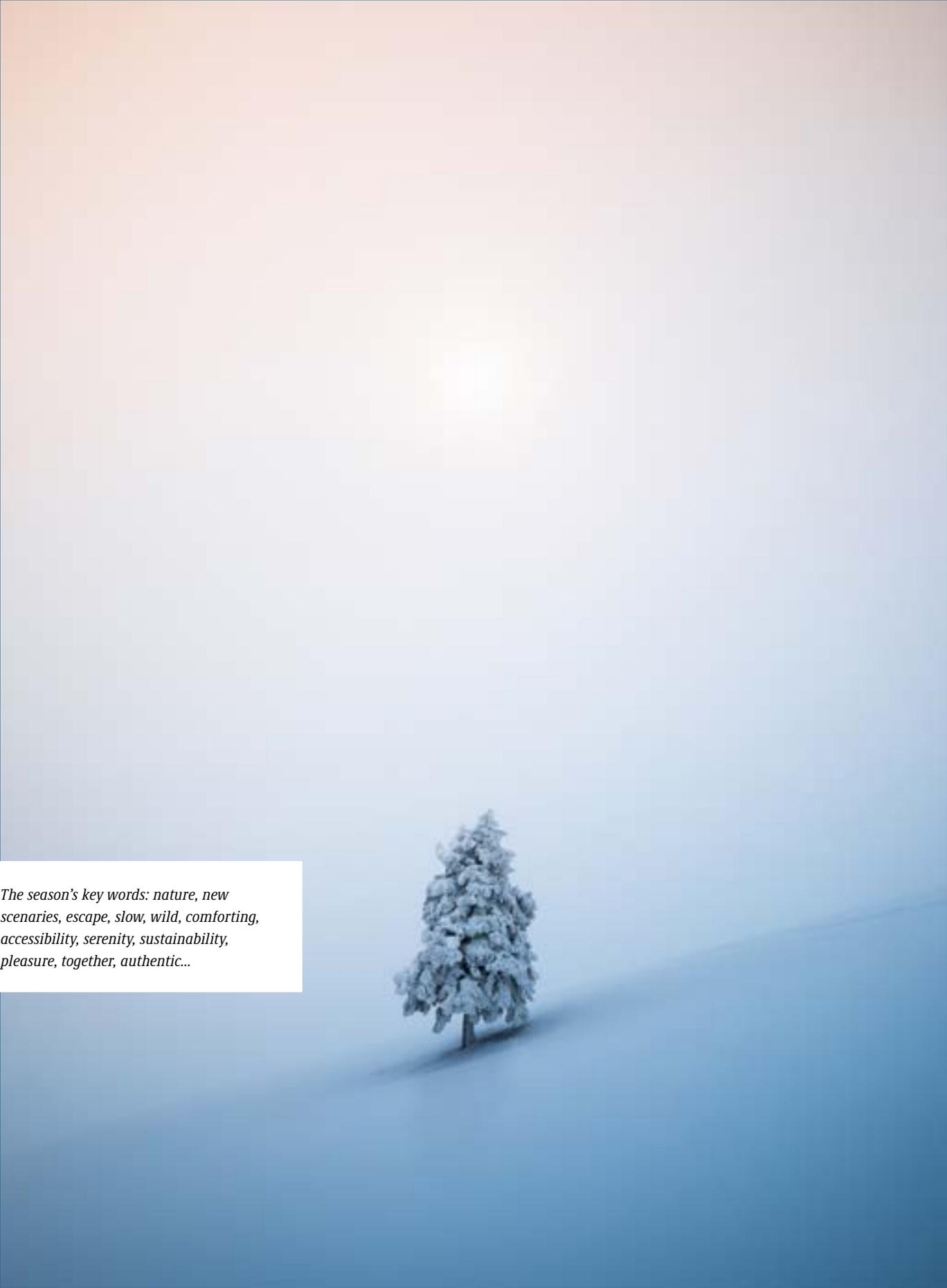
PRESS KIT

Winter 2020-2021



The French Mountains, *Naturally.*

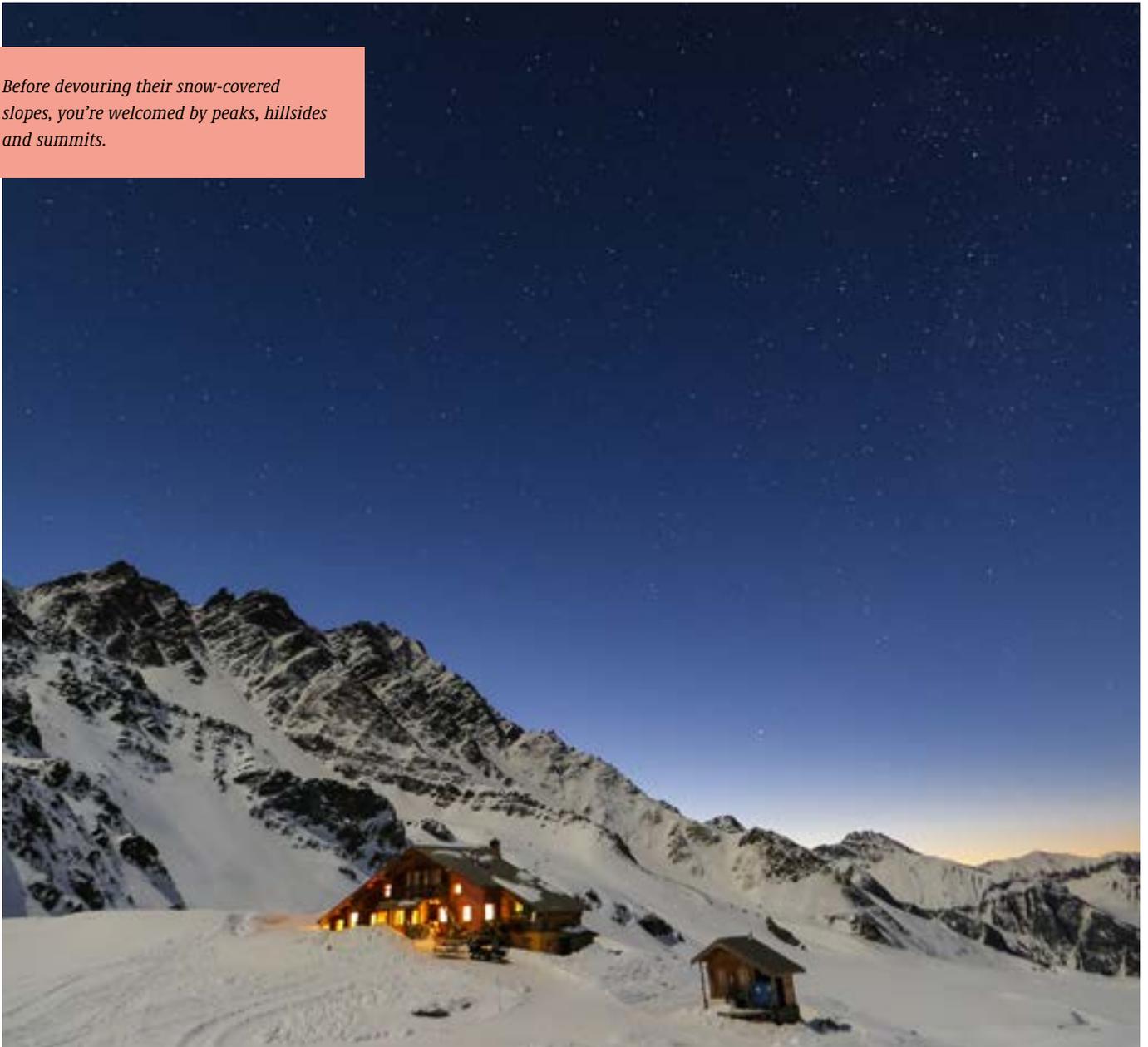
FRANCE MONTAGNES



The season's key words: nature, new scenarios, escape, slow, wild, comforting, accessibility, serenity, sustainability, pleasure, together, authentic...

- 4** **New interiors**
Follow our guide to new places to stay so you can cosy up comfortably in the warm.
- 6** **New on the slopes**
You're in for an even more fun, enjoyable time on the slopes for winter 2020-2021.
- 8** **An active destination**
Did you know that there are over 50 activities in the mountains in winter, and over 80 in summer?
- 10** **7 new gourmet hot spots**
These restaurants at high altitude are opening this winter for the first time.
- 12** **Yoga at the heart of nature**
Breathing & meditation, it's time to unfurl your mat up close to the summits.
- 14** **6 biodiversity initiatives**
Rethinking holidays in the modern age in light of current understanding, travel needs to reinvent itself.
- 16** **Away from the crowds**
Even in a busy resort, you can still find easily accessible tranquil spaces.
- 19** **Key figures**
A few useful figures to hone your knowledge of the mountains.

Before devouring their snow-covered slopes, you're welcomed by peaks, hillsides and summits.



New interiors

Follow our guide to new places to stay so you can cosy up comfortably in the warm, with views over the summits and snowy landscapes. This year, new hotels, luxurious chalets and accommodation right at the heart of nature await holidaymakers looking for a restorative change of scenery in the mountains.

Accommodation at the heart of nature Mountain landscapes are incomparable. At the heart of their vastness, you feel so tiny. Before devouring their snow-covered slopes, you're welcomed by peaks, hillsides and summits. So, what better way to honour these landscapes and recharge your batteries in their presence than cosying up

for a night or more right at the heart of nature. Rest assured, it's a perfect cocoon, you'll be toasty warm.

On the hillsides of Les Gets, in the peaceful hamlet of La Sarre, the all new "Chéry Dôme" is a one-of-a-kind type of accommodation boasting magnificent views over Mont Blanc. With all mod cons, it's the perfect place for an extraordinary experience under the stars.

Gérardmer in the Vosges gives you the chance to stay right at the heart of the forest in new ecological 100% independent accommodation.

Or why not stay in a former high mountain

Find more info about "Inspiring craftsmen and women in the mountains" on our website:

en.france-montagnes.com/magazine/lifestyle

pasture farm in Métabief, which has been renovated into a top-of-the-range gîte (Les Granges Raguin).

Rooms and services: new hotels

Discover new hotels opening this winter, where every detail has been designed for skiers' well-being.

Sporty: Hôtel Marielle****

Incarnating the spirit of Val Thorens, the hotel's name is a tribute to ski champion Marielle Goitschel, a legendary figure in international skiing and one of the resort's pioneers. Interior designer Leslie Gauthier has worked real magic, blending timeless, classic décor with vintage touches, using elements that are as original as they are unexpected.

Practical: Hôtel Mercure Peyragudes-Loudenvielle-Pyrénées****

Ideally located near the Balnéa thermal spa complex, and just a 5-minute walk from the centre of Loudenvielle, the hotel is right next to the Skyvall gondola lift. Dining-wise, it offers gourmet cuisine with a focus on Pyrenean specialities, showcasing homemade food prepared using local ingredients.

Personalised: Hôtel Chogori****

K2 Collection in Val d'Isère

Its exceptional location, unparalleled facilities, generously sized rooms and ultra-personalised service combine to create a rare experience for your stay in this white paradise. Val d'Isère also welcomes the Chalet Hôtel Le Mont-Blanc****, a chic doorstep skiing hotel residence combining rooms, private apartments, an adjacent chalet and traditional restaurant.

One-of-a-kind: Hôtel Diamond Rock**** in Tignes : The furniture was made to measure in Indonesian forests to match this gem of a hotel's sense of exotic escape. The rooms were designed by decorator Reyhana Tamboura and the hotel boasts a spa by La Maison du Tui Na, a specialist in traditional Chinese medicine.

Another two new 4* hotels are opening this winter at the foot of the slopes in La Rosière (Alpen Lodge) and Saint Martin de Belleville (Le Lodji), as well as a new 4* hotel in Saint-Gervais Mont-Blanc, the "Hôtel Mont-Blanc & Spa by sowell".

Luxury Chalets

Thanks to some remarkable renovations and top-of-the-range new builds, a number of unique, exceptional chalets are opening their doors.

In Le Grand-Bornand, a former farm renovated in true Bornand style, La Ferme d'Arthur**** is the perfect example of what it really means to stay in this "pearl" of the Aravis resort.

In Les Menuires, Le Québec chalet is undeniably one of the most beautiful constructions in the Belleville Valley, having taken two years of building work for the owner to achieve perfection. Everything has been designed and built to measure with local valley artisans and architects. Refined and elegant, the décor showcases contemporary furniture and spun wool (Filature Arpin). Eight new luxury chalets are also available to rent at La Joue du Loup in Le Dévoluy.

For a wilder experience on the slopes, head to La Clusaz, where the new Les Joux chalet offers two luxury apartments with alcove-style rooms for children on the mezzanine level.

The 500m² ZEMS Lodge in Morzine is a chalet like no other. With its unique architecture, the building nestles on a hillside, extending over five floors and fanning out horizontally to make the most of the views. The architect is Morzine local Hervé Marullaz and the interiors were the work of locally renowned designers Shep & Kyles, with a guiding influence from the French-English owners. In the neighbouring resort of Avoriaz, Le Chalet Aspen with its five premium apartments boasts a top-of-the-range concierge service.

Residences and holiday villages

One of the year's remarkable openings is undeniably the new Club Med in La Rosière, a 4-trident south-facing family resort. The Savoyard style décor showcases wood and stone, and the cow motif makes the animals its guests of honour, especially in the swimming pool!

This winter will also see the opening of the largest hotel complex in Europe built 100% from modular 3D wood in Le Corbier, the MMV Etoile des Sybelles Residence. A forward-thinking experiment in modular construction for the resort, the off-site construction from renewable materials has saved 30% in CO² emissions compared to normal construction. The group is also opening a hotel-club in La Plagne (Aime 2000).

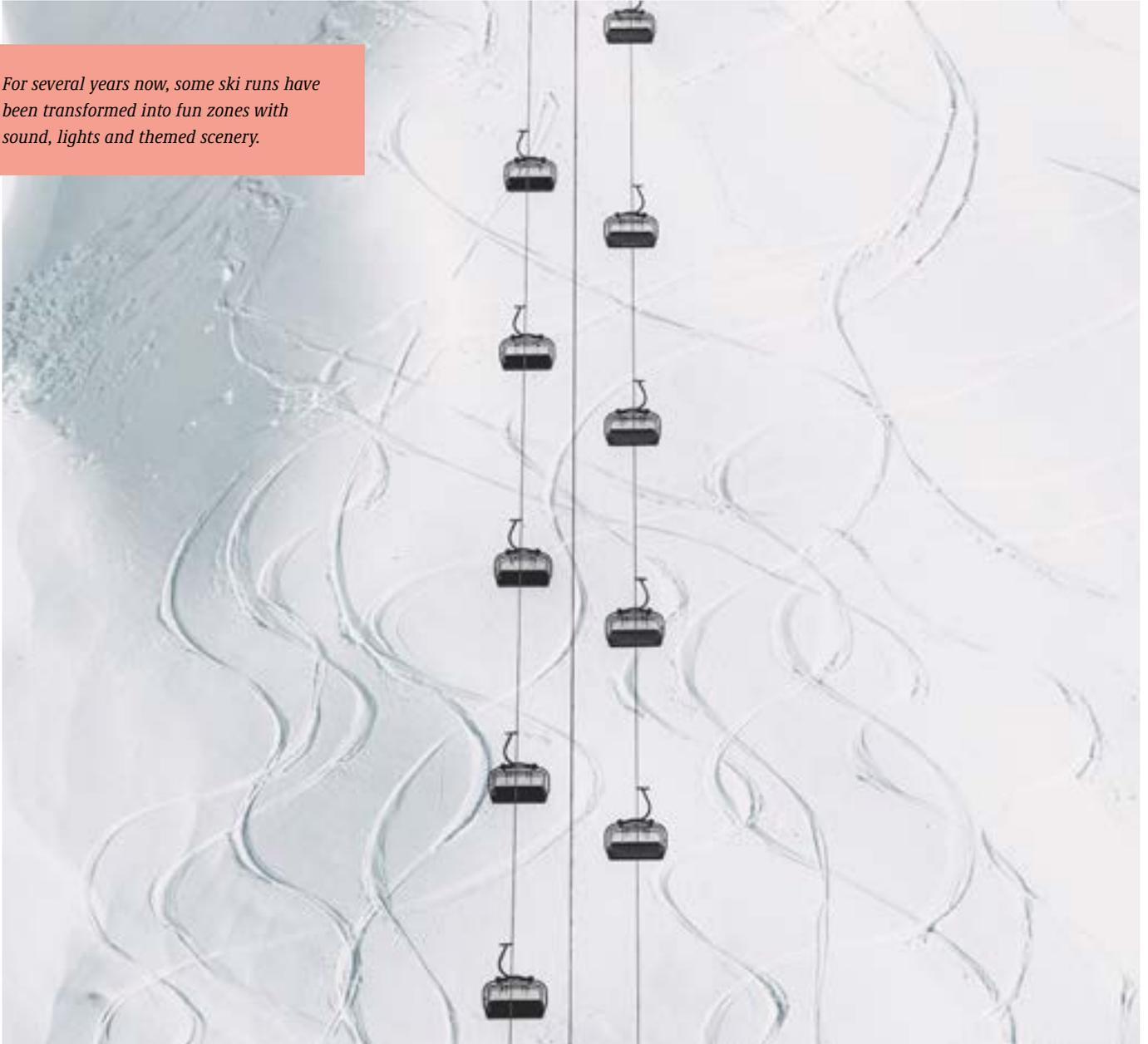
Residence openings at-a-glance: Le Pilatus 3* apart-hotel in Courchevel, Le Monde des Neiges 5* resort in Auron, L'Antares 5* residence in Méribel, Goélia's Les Chalets des Pistes residence in Combloux, Les Oursons residence in Les Arcs, the Sky hotel residence in La Rosière and the Rochebrune 2 residence (Les Cimes) in Orcières (Hautes-Alpes).

Have you heard the latest?

For 2021, VVF will be opening new buildings in Les 7 Laux (Prapoutel sector) in order to improve the village's tourism capacity. In Ste Foy Tarentaise, the opening of a new MGM residence "Les Fermes d'Eugénie" is also planned for next year.



For several years now, some ski runs have been transformed into fun zones with sound, lights and themed scenery.



New ski runs

The ski areas are donning their very best snowy coat to offer an even more fun, enjoyable 2020-2021 winter season. At the same time, every effort is being made to deliver a completely safe season, giving skiers peace of mind on the slopes.

Rearranged areas

Some ski areas are investing in remodelling and rearranging select areas, in order to

offer modern spaces that are adapted to the current circumstances, usage and concerns.

Peyragudes in the Pyrénées is focusing on redesigning the beginner's area (Peyresourde slope). New ski lifts will offer smoother access to runs, which have been specially designed and kitted out for those starting to ski, adults and children alike.

Saint-Gervais Mont Blanc has committed to

a major ski area modernisation plan, which includes equipping a brand new space dedicated to beginners, and the opening of two new ski lifts.

In Le Grand Bornand, the busy and strategically located Charmieux snow front will be home to a multi-service welcome centre integrating a new French Ski School reception area, a skipass sales outlet, ski lockers, and a childcare centre all under one roof... in combination with a new beginners' area arranged around a magic carpet suitable for all. The entire project has been

Modern spaces that are adapted to the current circumstances.

subject to highly detailed research in close collaboration with engineering ecologists.

In Morzine, the Nyon sector is becoming a real centre of attraction with Les Aigles du Léman restaurant once again providing a home for birds and offering more activities, fun snowshoeing routes from the top of the cable car, and a new-look picnic room that's had an eye-catching makeover.

New equipment

In terms of new ski lifts, snowsports fans will find a new 6-seater chair lift in Méribel (Le Bouquetin) and Valmorel (La Biolène), Le Gaston Express, a new chair lift in Le Corbier and a new chair lift in Ste Foy Tarentaise (replacing the Arpettaz lift).

In Vaujany, the Clos Giraud chair lift will be replaced next winter by a téléporté lift that combines both gondolas and chairs. This type of ski lift will lead to a significant reduction in journey time and will also be accessible to pedestrians.

Finally, in Arêches-Beaufort, a new 10-seater gondola lift will offer skiers more comfort, especially by serving the beginner's area on Le Cuvy plateau.

Fun runs

For several years now, some ski runs have been transformed into fun zones with sound,

lights and themed scenery. They're largely runs for beginners and children, aimed at making skiing more fun... this year, animals are the guests of honour!

At Super Besse, the little trappers' run is dotted with life-sized resin models of animals and equipped with interactive consoles and fun modules.

In Les Menuires, the Friendly Natural Park at the heart of an area dedicated to the local wildlife populating the Vanoise National Park lets visitors discover black grouse, golden eagles, rock ptarmigans, and of course, the famous whistling marmots. A whole range of challenges awaits little skiers on this run: parallel slalom, pitfalls to swerve, the frog tunnel, play equipment made from recycled materials...

New accessible boardercrosses with little moguls and banked turns are also available in Peyragudes and Saint-François Longchamp.

In La Plagne, you can ski while leading an investigation! Using a tablet, taking on either the persona of a troll or a secret agent, the ski day takes on a whole new dimension thanks to augmented reality. Embark on a family adventure on skis thanks to the outdoor slope version of the I-Quest escape game concept.

Ski for longer with early morning slope access in Les Aillons (first on the slopes) and evening access in La Clusaz. Le Merle run will now be floodlit at the end of the day, with artistic colour-themed lighting on certain evenings, using the run as a painter's blank canvas.

Ski areas are investing in making their slopes safer, speeding up morning openings after heavy snowfall by setting off preventative avalanches. Les 7 Laux, in Isère, has invested in a new system, as has Ste Foy Tarentaise (modernising the existing equipment).

In terms of skipasses, dynamic rates (adapting the price of skipasses according to various criteria such as the date of purchase, for example) continues to expand after having been introduced in 2019 in

Avoriaz and Val Cenis. This year, it will also be available on the Pralognan la Vanoise ski area.

A new 2 consecutive hour skipass gives you the flexibility to organise your day differently in Le Lioran (23€).

Ski touring continues to rise

Once again this year, there are a number of options for ski touring in total safety, with new runs in Les Orres (700-metre vertical climb with exit routes offering access to some beautiful viewing points), in Bernex (two new runs, one for beginners, one for the more experienced), at Le Lioran (two itineraries, one 5.6km and one 4.2km), in Orcières (open access) and in Avoriaz (from the village of Les Lindarets through a forest, along a stream or in a snow-white valley for immersion right at the heart of nature).

News

- The creation of two runs for good skiers in La Rosière: a black run with a 74% gradient and an ungroomed freeride area with a 400m vertical drop.

- Happy birthday to La Mauseleine - Gérardmer ski area in the Vosges! 60 years of Alpine skiing will be celebrated all season long with a range of events. The resort of Montclar (Southern Alps) will also be celebrating its 50th!

- As well as: a new ice cave in Vars (Hautes-Alpes).

French Ski School's news

Praz de Lys French Ski School: Off-piste Nordic hiking on cross-country skis with a mouth-watering refreshment stop

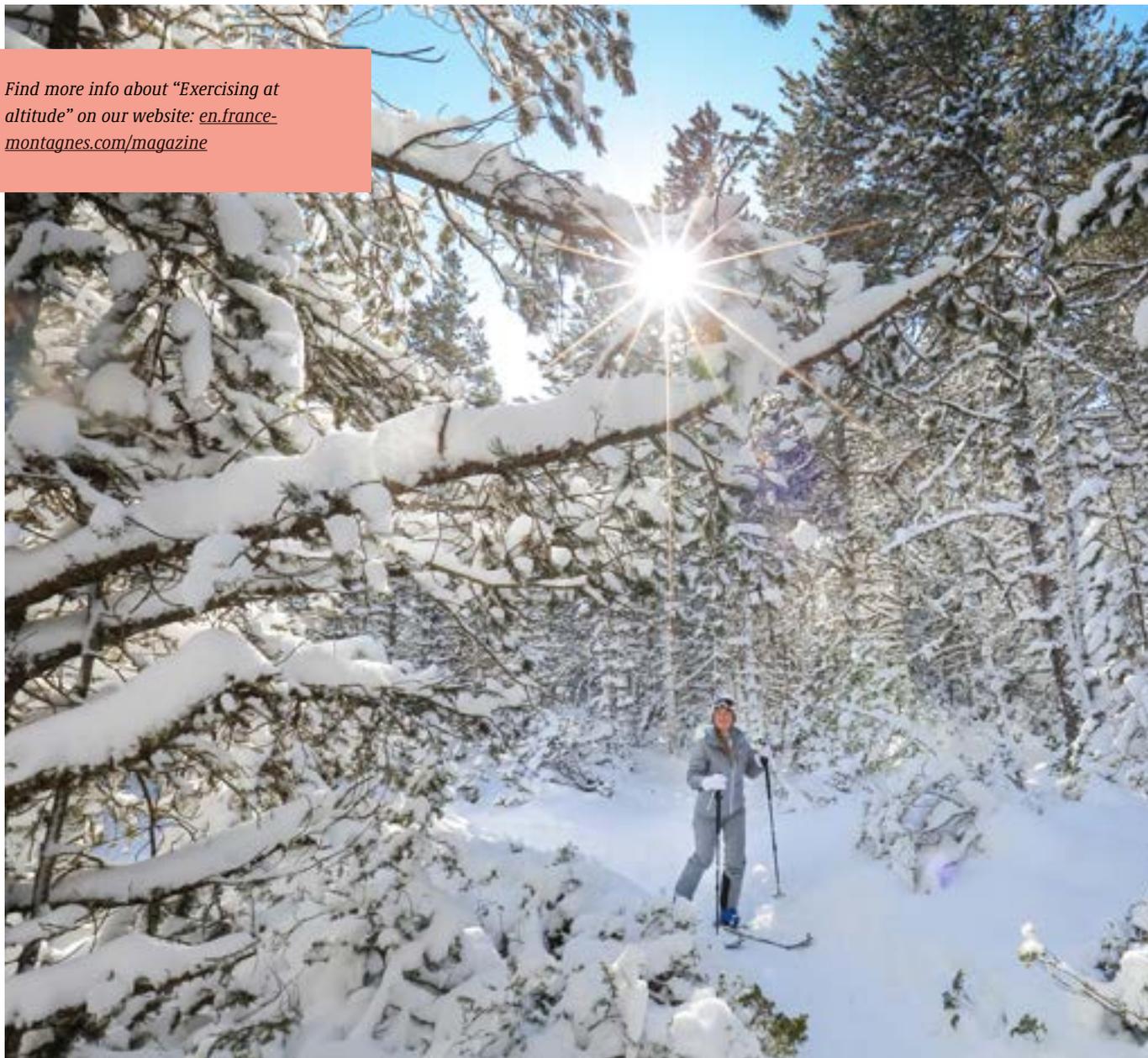
Val d'Allos French Ski School: new chalet reception area for children aged between 2 and 15 years.

Covid-19: all resorts are following the government health and safety's measures.

For more information, please contact us.



Find more info about "Exercising at altitude" on our website: en.france-montagnes.com/magazine



An active destination

Did you know that you can enjoy more than 50 activities in the mountains in winter, and over 80 in summer? And there are even more new additions this year to set the pace for the 2020-2021 season. You'll find a glimpse of them below.

New zip lines

In the mountains, skiers are gripped by the exhilarating thrill of snowsports, but when it's hard to sustain that same high, zip lines offer a new way to glide! This winter, you'll find three new zip lines at the summits: in Serre Chevalier (up to 110km an hour!),

Valmorel (1,400 metres long) and Villard de Lans (includes turns, accessible to families). There's also a new 4-season toboggan in Les Angles in the Pyrenees, as well as a SnowTubing run at La Bresse Hohneck in the Hautes-Vosges.

Immerse yourself in nature

In Les Menuires and Saint Martin de Belleville, new activities are once again making nature top priority this winter. To accompany those who want to get back to the source, Sabrina offers forest 'sylvotherapy' sessions: a practice derived from yoga and meditation,

Family Plus labelled resorts ensure an optimal welcome for families.

which harnesses the positive energy waves emitted by trees. Sabrina, a forest therapist who's passionate about plants, also offers "wild plant" excursions, natural cosmetic workshops and discovery hikes.

In Morzine, Shirin Yoku (forest bathing) is available in winter. Wearing snowshoes, embark on a slow, silent walk between the fir, spruce and beech trees... Snow crystals, snowflakes, animal tracks and birds specific to the forest all make for a unique and immersive experience.

Unusual activity

This winter, an activity from Finland will be available for the first time in France, in Val Cenis: Ice Floating. Imagine stretching out on a frozen lake for a moment of extraordinary relaxation...Facing the mountains, relax in crystal clear waters at around 5°C, whilst wearing a wetsuit to keep you warm. Another unusual activity: Snow Volleyball will be making its debut in Valberg (Southern Alps).

Traditional mountain activities

In Praz de Lys Sommand, experience total immersion in the mountains on an igloo hike: after a short snowshoe hike to reach a summit facing Mont Blanc,

participants come together to spend about 3 hours building an igloo (in a fun, sociable atmosphere and with advice from a guide!), in which they will spend the night. Inside: cosy comfort with a generous Savoyard meal.

A new natural ice rink (400m²) is opening in Val Thorens: visitors will discover a vast skating area and refreshments chalet.

All ages

The resorts are always coming up with new ways to dazzle families and help them to have fun, such as Les Légendes de Combloux: themed activities and shows with a unique programme each week in winter and summer. Treasure hunts, sound and light shows, touring theatre, lively shows immersing visitors into the atmosphere of the Légendes de Combloux, a cross between comedy and historical fact.

A fun village for 4-12 year olds is opening in the Family Plus labelled resort of Les 7 Laux with a range of games and sensory toys, a lifesize labyrinth, tunnels, cabins, toboggan area, treasure hunt... All organised into different age brackets so that every child can find an activity to suit.

Vaujany (Family Plus resort) is launching a new mini-musher activity (dog-sledding), and Auron is opening a new aquafun centre.

Family Plus

The national Family Plus label has been awarded to 44 mountain resorts, and over 2,500 service providers are committed to the campaign. The label is based on criteria guaranteeing great holidays, making life easier for parents by offering products and services adapted to children and teenagers.

1. A personalised welcome for families (with special attention paid to children in particular)
2. Activities and entertainment suitable for all ages
3. A price to suit all budgets and all ages (especially on skipasses with 'Tribe' passes offering discounts to families of all shapes and sizes, free skipasses for the under 5s, and special offers for beginners...)
4. Activities for all ages to enjoy together or separately (themed week, open-air nature

activities, learning to ski in safety, protected toboggan runs, discoveries...)

5. All businesses and services easily accessible (childcare booking facility for example)

6. The highest standards of professional childcare

This winter, for the fourth year in a row, the National Association of Mountain Resort Mayors (ANMSM) and mountain resorts bearing the "Family Plus" label pledge to make the wishes of seriously ill children come true in partnership with the Petits Princes Association.

Génération Montagne, a large-scale operation by Auvergne-Rhône-Alpes Tourisme and mountain partners aimed at young people.

Piloted by Auvergne-Rhône-Alpes Tourisme, in collaboration with the National Association of Mountain Resort Mayors and around forty private and public partners, Génération Montagne is a promotional campaign for the mountains aimed at children and teenagers. It aims to guide resorts through improvements to what they offer young people: the type and range of activities on offer, group stays, suitable accommodation, specially tailored budgets etc.

Since it was established, every year Génération Montagne has helped young people between the ages of 8 and 25 enjoy special offers and great deals: events, activities, attractively priced breaks throughout the Auvergne-Rhône-Alpes region.

Génération Montagne aims to pass on "mountain" culture to young people. As well as being a tourist attraction, the mountains are somewhere people live, with many possibilities for those who want to move there, work and take up new challenges.



7 new gourmet hot spots

La Ferme du 23

A **slopeside restaurant** is opening on the L'Escargot run in Val Cenis, accessible to skiers of all abilities thanks to its green run, which is the longest in Europe. The restaurant concept is all about authenticity, with a simple, locally sourced menu (using only local ingredients) and an original atmosphere thanks to a few surprise tenants (2 sheep, 2 goats, 2 calves).

Le Repaire de l'Aigle

Located at the top of the Thollon les Mémises gondola lift, Le Repaire de l'Aigle promises visitors a panoramic gourmet getaway. Drawing design inspiration from real nests, the exterior blends harmoniously with the mountains' natural ridge line. The **slopeside restaurant's** two distinct areas, a snack bar and a traditional restaurant (Savoyard cuisine), have been designed around large panoramic windows offering uninterrupted views over Lac Léman.

Le Pic Vert

Following the opening of the Pic Vert chair lift in December 2018 in Les Orres, this sector of the resort's development has been rounded off by a new **slopeside restaurant**. At 2,230m, it offers traditional, family cuisine. With a large terrace seating 250, skiers can enjoy incredible views over the Embrun valley and Serre-Ponçon lake.

Chez Berthet Concept store

Have a coffee while hiring your skis in Les Gets! 600m² dedicated to sport, design and good food. On one side is Berthet, selling and hiring ski and mountain equipment, on the other side is Le Velvette, where you can browse and get a bite to eat. The new owner, an architect by trade, is a foodie with exacting standards. This **urban and contemporary** space offers brunch,

après-ski, decorative items for sale around the open kitchen, a wood-fired pizza oven and a central dessert buffet.

Les 9 Névés

Enjoy a culinary, restorative and active experience in this **guest house** located in Arêches-Beaufort, Savoie Mont-Blanc. A new concept for the village that greatly resembles its owner Benoit and his cuisine: modern, welcoming and refined; without losing the qualities that have forged the establishment's reputation: kindness and authenticity.

La Cave des Lys

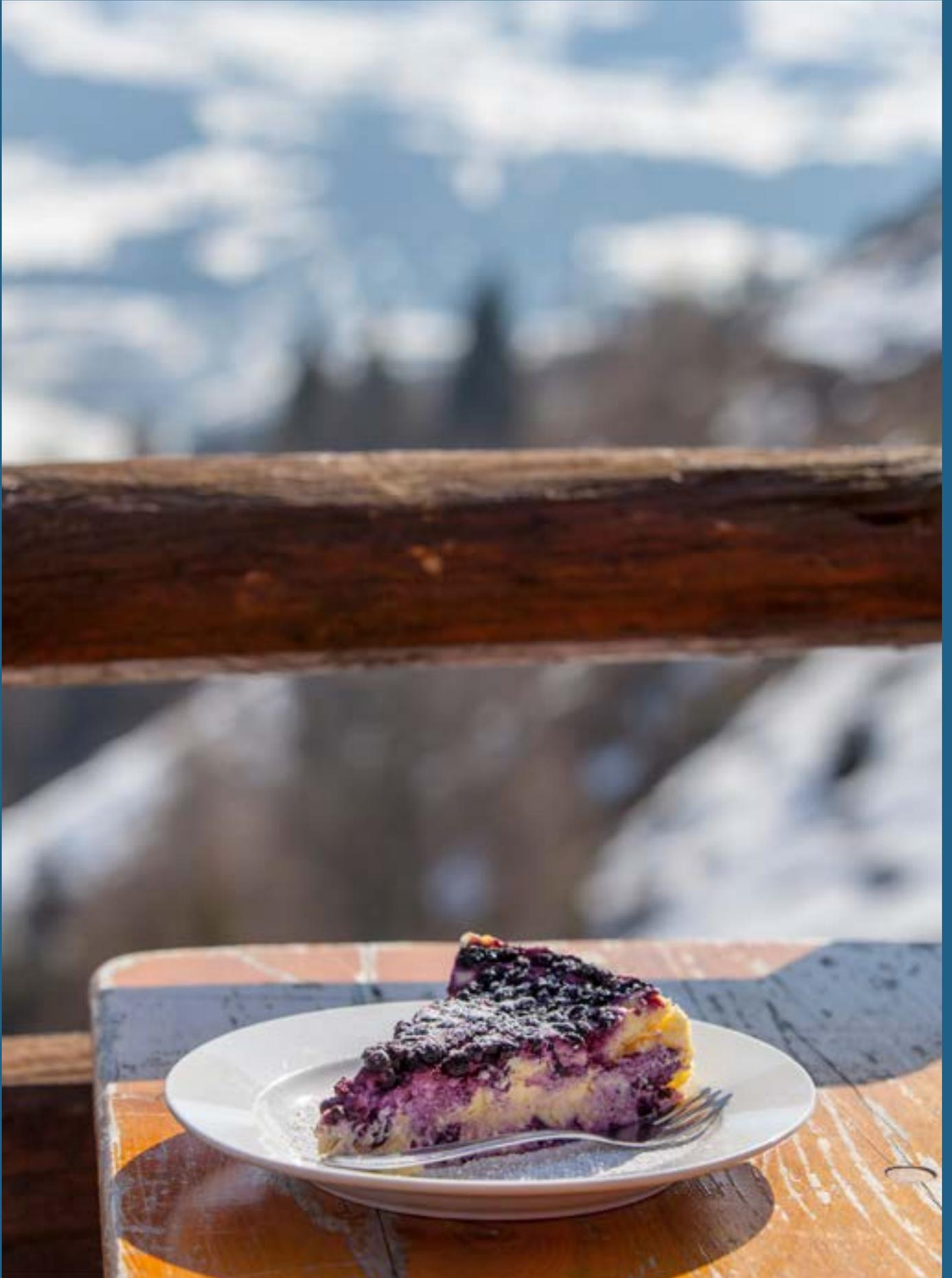
In addition to the restaurant and bar of the same name, a **wine cellar** (featuring several top wine varieties, many of which are classic Savoie vintages) is opening in Courchevel le Praz, also selling cheeses, local produce and takeaway dishes (fondue, raclette, sharing platters, etc.).

Les GastroNote & Co

François and Mathieu, the pair of chef-friends behind "GastroNote" in Le Grand Bornand have become masters in the art of **experimental, mobile cuisine**. This winter, they're launching their first "fixed location" establishment at the foot of the slopes. "GastroNote & Co", part of the party scene, will become the headquarters of the "Grill Academy Montagne by Weber" and its range of workshops, courses and other culinary events open to individuals and companies.

Also: the opening of new restaurant Vars Coquillage, offering a homemade sushi menu prepared by a professional sushi man. An original, unusual idea at an altitude of 1,850 metres at the heart of this Hautes-Alpes resort.





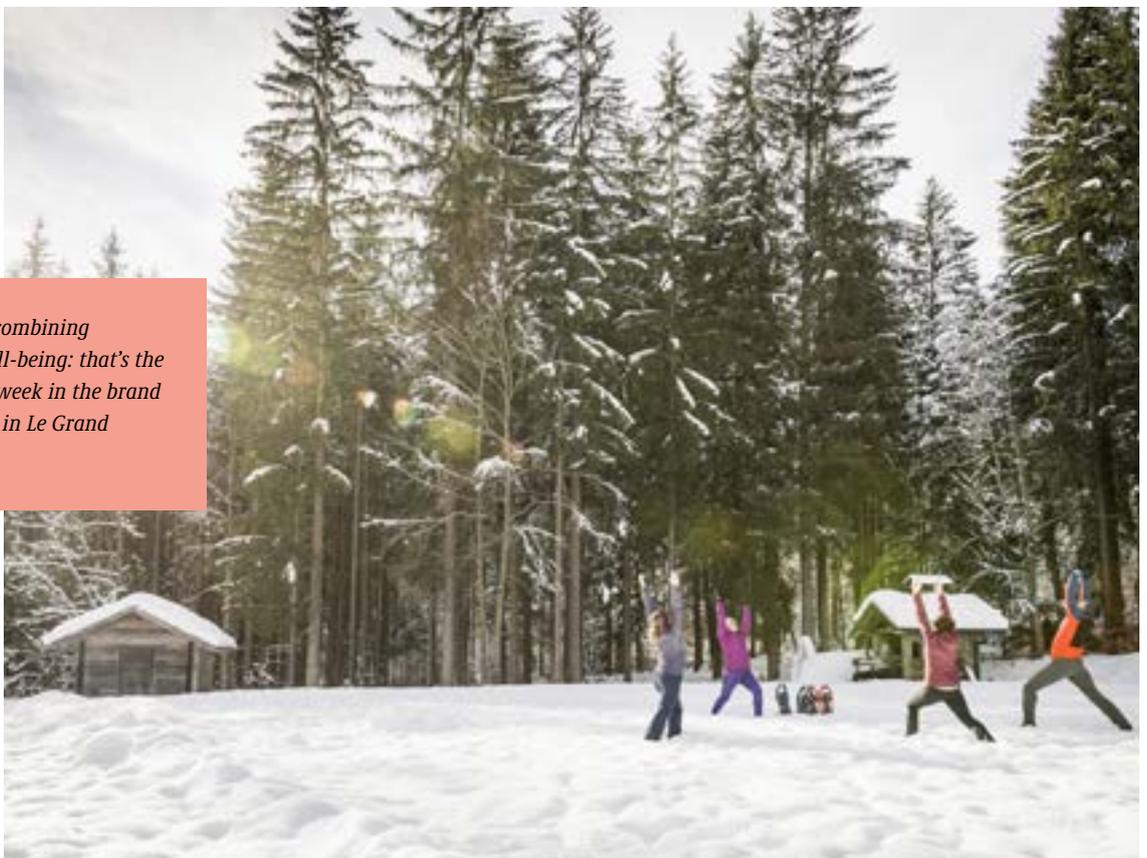
Yoga at the heart of nature: breathing & contemplation

When you do yoga, or want to give it a go, you're aiming to bring together several principles in a single activity: physical movement with postures (asanas), breathing (pranayama) and reconnecting with your true self (mindfulness and relaxation). There are countless different types of yoga, but almost all of them agree on the fact that doing it in the open air adds something special. In a mountain environment, in the bracing fresh air and snow, the 3 principles of

yoga come together in a unique way. The body reacts differently and adapts, your breathing deepens, there's a greater sense of reconnecting with yourself because of the humility that comes from being faced with such a vast, stunning environment, which helps you to gain perspective. Here's an overview of what's available in resort:

Many people discovered yoga during lockdown, at home, in the warm thanks to

Take care of yourself by combining physical exercise and well-being: that's the aim of the «Yoga Detox» week in the brand new «Auberge Nordique» in Le Grand Bornand.



apps and numerous free online classes. Now they're familiar with it, it's time for them to unfurl their mat up close to the summits.

On Le Belvédère restaurant terrace in Les Gets, at an altitude of 1,570 metres, Barbara offers yoga and stretching to skiers and hikers. A wonderful interlude accompanied by a healthy breakfast to find your ski legs before launching yourself onto the slopes, or a relaxing chillout moment admiring Mont Blanc. A slopeside early morning yoga session is also available in Les 2 Alpes, to gently awaken your body outside, followed by brunch.

In Ste Foy Tarentaise, yoga teacher Dave Crandon focuses particularly on alignment, as well as soothing aches and pains, good organ function, and improving circulation and digestion. His classes are given in small groups on the "1580m" restaurant terrace.

Amidst the mountains in Val d'Isère, join a yoga class in the Solaise Lounge at an altitude of 2,550 metres (access via gondola lift).

Yoga sessions at the heart of nature are also available in Montgenèvre, Vaujany, Le Val d'Allos (with a light lunch made from locally sourced ingredients) and even in Le Pic du Midi (Pyrenees)!

Five wellness and detox retreats in the mountains on our website: en.france-montagnes.com/magazine/advice-and-tips/

Snowshoeing and yoga

Yoga, just like meditation, is often associated with walking. When there's a decent amount of snow cover, snowshoes make it easy to get around. It made sense in the mountains therefore, to offer a combination of both of these mindful, in-touch-with-nature activities.

Apprentice yogis can get started at Saint-Gervais Mont-Blanc, Combloux (where the focus is on breathing), Morzine (a full day of snowshoeing interspersed with yoga breaks and a fireside meditation session) and in

Serre-Chevalier.

Mini-yogis

Although widely recognised for its many benefits, yoga still has surprises in store when done in pairs, between parents and children.

Active, fun and restorative at the same time, parent-child yoga sessions offered in Thollon les Mémises include a series of solo and duo postures, as well as moments of relaxation. Via a vibrational exchange, children find new ways to connect with parents, while parents can find their own inner child... Designed as play, it is an opportunity for an intimate, parent-child experience. Age 3 and over.

In Le Praz-de Lys, mountain guide André Genin, and hypno-practitioner Roxane Rassinoux have joined forces to offer a 3hr experience to enjoy as a family during your stay. The two-part session starts with a guided relaxation session led by Roxane. The second stage is an unusual "journey" to complement the effects of the hike, helping everyone to leave free of any tension. Suitable for the over 7s.

Yoga teacher and naturopath, mountain companion and Vanoise National Park ambassador, Thierry Bardagi offers holidaymakers of all ages a chance to share... laughter! The session starts off gently with a few sophrology exercises. Once the tension has been released, families get started with laughter yoga. A liberating practice with multiple benefits available in Haute-Maurienne (lowering stress levels, oxygenating the brain, massaging the stomach, improving self-confidence...).

Other ideas for well-being activities to try in the mountains this winter

- Tui Na massage or a music and dance journey with Cler in Courchevel

- Meditative walking with the Auron Guides' Office

- 'Sophro-hiking' in Les Contamines-Montjoie

- Breathing and cardiac coherence offered by Pleyn'itude in Les 7 Laux

- Meditation at the heart of nature with

Fanny in the Jura mountain resort of Métabief

- Mindful snowsports Pyrenees in Le Grand Tourmalet, a sophrology practice for better snowsports, in harmony with yourself and your environment.

- The Serenity well-being pass in Val Thorens: one well-being or nature activity per day (open-air yoga and meditation, Ayurvedic warm oil massages, snowshoeing hikes, meditative walking by the riverside, Ayurvedic and dietary guidance, spa access).

Examples of well-being breaks

Yoga detox week at L'Auberge Nordique in Le Grand-Bornand

Let go and take care of yourself by combining physical exercise and well-being: that's the aim of this all-inclusive week in the restorative setting of the new Auberge Nordique. On the programme, yoga lessons in the morning and activities in the afternoon (Nordic walking, birch sap-gathering walk, reflexology and self-massage) with access to the well-being area and the benefits of its salt grotto. Rates: from 672€ per person (accommodation + meals + activities + equipment + shuttlebuses) Week of the 21st to the 27th of March 2021.

Yogiski in Les Menuires

A week of yoga, as well as walking, relaxation and meditation mixed in with positive energy and a great, sociable time. Discover free sophrology workshops open to everyone, laughter yoga and vinyasa yoga, 'sylvotherapy', Qi Gong and reflexology. The week finishes with a sunset hike to Lac du Lou, followed by an open-air pranayama yoga session and a vegetarian meal before going back down to the resort under the stars. Rates: from 296€ per person (accommodation + workshop pass) Week of the 12th to the 18th of April 2021.



6 biodiversity initiatives

Rethinking holidays for the modern age in light of current understanding, it's clear that travel needs to reinvent itself and the mountains are no exception. Preserving them is a priority. Resorts are brimming with initiatives. Locals and visitors, all of whom love these fantastic surroundings, are playing their part to preserve this unique environment with its own specific stakes and wildlife.

Mellifera – the European Dark Bee sanctuary in Les Menuires

The creation of the European Dark Bee and Nature Centre is the end result of several steps taken to safeguard this local endangered species. Housed in a traditional Alpine chalet, the Centre is dedicated to teaching and raising awareness about Apis Mellifera Mellifera - the bee's Latin name - and biodiversity. Fun and immersive, with a range of films and sensory exhibitions, including the particular highlight of a live beehive with a glazed viewing area, the centre is also accessible to visitors with disabilities.

Protecting the Black Grouse in Les Gets

The town of Les Gets plays an active role in the biodiversity observatory launched by Les Portes du Soleil's 7 French ski areas, which aims to combine tourism with the preservation of the natural landscape. One such measure is aimed at the protection of the black grouse, an emblematic bird species in the Alps. At this time of year, their survival is threatened by the intense cold and scarce feeding resources, making them especially sensitive to disturbance.

Also of note: a number of resorts have been committed to protecting the black grouse for several years. In Valberg, for example, the resort, the Mercantour National Park and the ski lift company have committed to creating tranquil zones on the ski area

for black grouse, delineated by informative signage aimed at skiers. This step towards protecting the black grouse can also be found on certain ski lifts, with signals on the cables to avoid birds accidentally colliding with them.

Raising skier awareness in Pralognan la Vanoise

The Vanoise National Park is home to a rich variety of wildlife and plantlife, twenty glaciers, over 100 summits above 3,000 metres, around forty mountain refuges... and, along with the Grand Paradis National Park, forms the largest protected area in Europe. But what represents an area of freedom for lovers of virgin snow and wide open spaces is also a vital site for wildlife. Disturbances caused by skiers and walkers passing through a habitat makes already fragile animals expend precious energy on running away. By keeping wintersports fans informed and aware of their responsibility towards wildlife, we can help to create a better coexistence between Alpine activities and wildlife. Targeted activities to raise environmental awareness are run yearly by the Maison de la Vanoise in Pralognan-la-Vanoise: activities, workshops, nature viewing point, get together and presentation evenings...





You'll find ideas for greener mountain breaks and eco-friendly hot spots at en.france-montagnes.com/magazine/advice-and-tips

Shh, please do not disturb, hibernation in progress in Les Contamines-Montjoie

Les Contamines-Montjoie is home to the highest altitude Nature Reserve in France and the only protected area in the Mont Blanc mountain range. To raise awareness among holidaymakers, a room dedicated to the nature reserve offers greater understanding thanks to open-access informative illustrations, as well as activities available for all ages. Additionally, for skiers, ski tourers and snowshoers, awareness signs have been erected in tranquil areas, displaying key information to help keep species safe in winter too.

Natur'Protect in Ste Foy Tarentaise

Aimed at children, the stakeholders of tomorrow, the unique Natur'protect plan created by the resort of Ste Foy Tarentaise displays guidance for protecting the mountains, water, and promoting recycling through fun characters and routes.

Keep a look out for Natur' Marmottes, Natur' Renard and Natur' Chamois on the ski runs and in the resort.

In search of winter wildlife in Peisey-Vallandry

Once a week, Peisey-Vallandry's holidaymakers can go in search of winter wildlife under the watchful eye of the Vanoise National Park rangers: chamois, ibexes, deer, roe deer in their winter habitat, nesting bearded vultures...

Getting to know the mountain's biodiversity is a great start towards loving it and wanting to protect it.





You'll need to have a pair of snowshoes to reach some of these timeless destinations, where the mountains really come into their own. You can of course go with a guide, but there are many routes you can take on your own.

Away from the crowds

Even in a purpose-built resort, you can still find easily accessible quiet areas. Follow these tips from the mountain press officers to discover the secret spots far away from the crowds.

A snowshoe walk is an easy, accessible way to quickly find yourself almost or entirely alone in a natural setting, with magnificent, unspoilt surroundings.

You can of course go with a guide, but there are many routes you can take on your own.

A few examples: Sestrières woods in Montgenèvre, Le Col d'Arves from Le Corbier, Gérardmer's three new snowshoe circuits, Lac de Ste Marguerite in Les Orres (Hautes-Alpes), L'Arseille plateau in Chamrousse, Le Cembraie in La Plagne, Le Vallon de Narreyroux from Puy St Vincent (typical mountain hamlet), Lac des Corbeaux in La Bresse (very easily accessible), Le Salon du Capucin in Mont-Dore (glade), Le Prat de Bouc Nordic ski area in Lioran, Le Vallon du Loup in Montclar, the Sentier Bernadette in Les Menuires, Le Golf de Valberg Nordic ski area...

In Les 2 Alpes, a walk suitable to the over 7s offers access to a winter migration zone chamois have chosen to make their home, where the animals can be watched from a distance.

You'll need to have a pair of snowshoes to reach some of these timeless destinations, where the mountains really come into their own. Why not visit an igloo in Serre-Chevalier or a yurt a little way from Val Thorens to sample an array of delicacies? Or why not head to a remote mountain refuge by moonlight, such as the one in St Gervais Mont-Blanc where a delicious Savoyard 'farcement' potato and bacon dish awaits at Le P'tit Riquet.

On snowshoes, cross-country skis or sometimes even touring skis, you can also get to Mont-Caly, a perfect Alpine hamlet a little way from Les Gets, Lac de la Grande Léchère mountain refuge near Saint François Longchamp for a Savoyard afternoon snack, Le Habert d'Aiguebelle in Les 7 Laux which requires pre-booking, Le Roc de la Pêche mountain refuge 40 minutes from Pralognan la Vanoise (with a hot tub!) or even the Vallombrun mountain refuge in the Vanoise National Park (accessible from Val Cenis).

It's also worth noting a few lesser-known spots such as Les Aillons resort in Les Bauges, the Serre-Eyraud resort in the Hautes-Alpes, the village of Monal near the resort of Ste Foy Tarentaise or even Le Bout du Monde, a peaceful haven in Val d'Isère. Some places are only accessible by skis, such as the Avals Valley in Courchevel or the Forest of Les Ecuets in La Rosière, a part of the ski area that's tucked away from the busy runs.

Our secret spots:

Stay out of the resort centre:

- Chalet 1864: the last house in the Grand-Bornand valley: you'll think you've dived into a painting by Rembrandt... at the foot of the Aravis mountain range, "Chalet 1864" is an exceptional guest house and restaurant named after the year it was built, which invites you to a peaceful retreat set among ancient woodland.

- Chalet du Berger: a unique experience and a peaceful night in Les Contamines-Montjoie: located on the ski area at an altitude of 1,800 metres, this is a typical mountain-style guest house. One cosy sleeping area (just one!) is reserved for guests to spend a peaceful night under the stars with panoramic views of Mont Blanc.

- Hotel le Tacconnet: discreet and charming in Praz de Lys: nestled on the south slope, opposite Mont Blanc and edging a ski run, the hotel features 9 bedrooms including family rooms with very affordable rates, throughout the season. The restaurant offers peace and quiet in the sunshine for an open air lunch break on the large terrace where you can enjoy the varied menu. It couldn't be simpler: we peel, chop, grate, combine, cook and simmer....

- Hôtel La Neyrette: peace, relaxation and authenticity in an exceptional setting in the village of Saint Disdier, Le Devoluy. Surrounded by mountains and forests, a well-being break awaits where the pleasure extends all the way to your taste-buds when you sample the restaurant's 100% home-made, carefully prepared and authentic cuisine by chef Laurent. A word of advice: try the trout, fished-to-order from the restaurant fish tank.

- Les Rhodos: five rooms with vintage décor tucked away in the Col des Aravis near La Clusaz: in a hushed atmosphere, the themed rooms let you immerse yourself in the "Vintage Sports" atmosphere with décor in the colours of 1970s sporting events, or in the "Cheyenne" room, decorated around the theme of Indigenous American tribes, or even the "Music" room, an actual little recording studio.

- Chalet Colinn: hidden between Tignes and Val d'Isère, this stunning chalet was built on a forgotten ruin.. This passionate story began fifteen years ago when the owners fell in love with a beautiful ruin in the small village of Franchet, overlooked by developers. Their idea of turning this exceptionally well-located ruin into a charming house, with the intention of sharing it with guests who were equally passionate about authenticity has now become a reality.

Romantic hot spots:

- Le Nid: a chalet in the style of a little bird's nest in the nearby hamlet of Saint-Martin de Belleville: the latest cocoon in the Caseblanche hamlet (35 chalets between 30 and 200m²) is ready for its first winter. Enjoying the perfect location at the foot of the slopes, this cosy 30m² chalet is a dream destination for a first holiday away together, in the snow. Nestled by the fireplace with unspoilt views over the surrounding mountains, it offers a total change of scenery. To extend this enchanted experience, what could be better than pre-dinner drinks for two on the magnificent balcony.

- Les Cabanes Entre Terre et Ciel in Le Val d'Arly: mountainside accommodation, including the new Feuille cabin, in the shape of a leaf 10 metres above the ground (the highest of all the cabins, also boasting the clearest views). It features a roof terrace with a Jacuzzi, a net webbing area putting 10 metres of air beneath your feet, and views of Mont Blanc. Underneath is a shady, planted terrace with patio doors that fold back so the room can be partially outside for a total immersion in nature for two.

Total immersion at the heart of nature:

- Altidômes: an eco-bivouac in the heart of the Bernex ski area: get away from it all, shut yourself off and prioritise grounding experiences, an invitation for everyone to collect new, unique shared memories rather than material objects. A luxurious night under the stars awaits visitors thanks to the dome-shaped panoramic roof and wood-fired stoves.

- Ferme de Fleurette: a gîte and farm in Métabief. Céline and Mickaël welcome their guests in summer and winter to their comfortable home located at the heart of the typical mountain village of Haut-Doubs. The gîte is a stone's throw from their farm, allowing guests to discover how a real farm produces Comté cheese.

- Grand'baraque de Malaterre: a cabin deep in the woods of Villard de Lans. Right at the heart of the forest nestles a traditional woodcutter's cabin where lumberjack-farmer Bernard and storyteller-witch Lydia share their passion for Le Vercors. This family auberge (run by the same family for

30 years) offers dishes cooked on a woodfire and local specialities.

- A shepherd's stone cabin (known as a 'courtaou') and slopeside cabins in Le Grand Tourmalet: Yan and Cédric welcome visitors to their farm, showing them the work they do there. You can even take part in looking after the lambs at feeding time, and working with the sheepdogs... The charming accommodation is equipped with all mod-cons. Another secret spot near Le Pic du Midi, Payolle is the perfect place for fans of wide open spaces to enjoy the great outdoors. You'll even find a cosy nest tucked away high in the trees.

Top of the range:

- Le refuge de la Traye: comfortable luxury in a remote Méribel hamlet. The first top of the range mountain refuge in the French Alps, it offers exceptional services including gastronomic cuisine, several types of accommodation (in chalets or in suites), a spa... Unique and one-of-a-kind, it combines authenticity and refinement.

- La Halle des Cascades: a highly luxurious chalet on the slopes of Les Arcs. Situated on the edge of the resort of Arc 2000 (around a 15-minute walk), this chalet, a former stone sheepfold, has been renovated into an exceptional destination (surface area of more than 400m²), spread over two floors.

Well-kept dining secrets:

- La Ferme des Etroits in Bonnenuit, 6 kilometres from Valloire: cheese tastings, farm visits and rustic meals in a convivial, peaceful setting that's also home to 3 guest bedrooms.

- La Ramballade aux Angles restaurant, a Pyrenean treat, it is the best restaurant in Les Angles on Tripadvisor

- L'Aigle Blanc: at the end of a little-used road in Valmorel, on the edges of a forest. Homemade cuisine.

- Les Bulles des Mines d'Or restaurant in Morzine: a brand new restaurant concept tucked away in the trees, where you can even eat in a private bubble.

- The Napoléon mountain refuge, a few kilometres from Vars via a footpath: a peaceful place opposite a lake with cuisine that showcases local produce.

KEY FIGURES

3	Hours it takes by train <i>between Paris and the closest mountain resorts.</i>
23%	Mountainous territory <i>in France, covering 124 000 km².</i>
27,20€	Average price <i>of a ski pass 2019.</i>
44	Resorts qualified as “Famille Plus“
73€	Average budget <i>for a ski holiday: per day per person*.</i>
350	Ski resorts or ski destinations in France <i>of which 100 resorts are “Association Nationale des Maires des Stations de Montagne“.</i>
17 000	Ski instructors <i>in the French Ski School.</i>
18 000	18 000 employees in the ski areas <i>20% permanent and 80% temporary</i> <i>More than 120,000 jobs in the resort during the winter season.</i>
205 000 000	Overnight stays in the mountains. <i>Winter 33% - summer 51%.</i>



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