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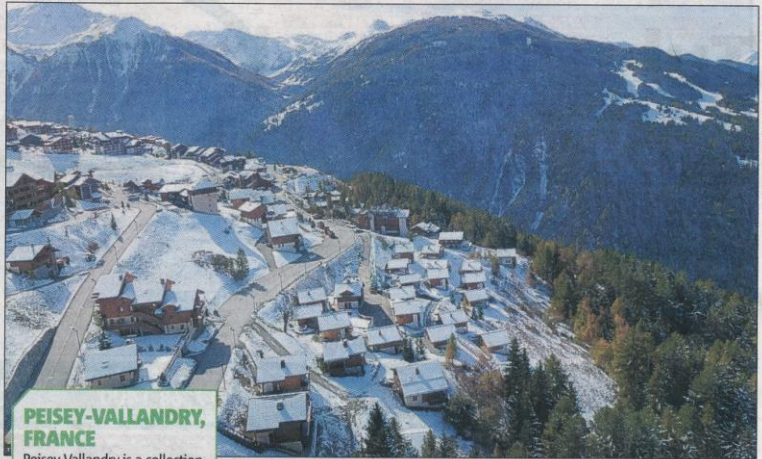
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## METRO travel

travel@ukmetro.co.uk

# There's snow problem

**WEATHER-PROOF SKIING** CHOOSE A RESORT THAT HAS A GOOD SNOW RECORD FOR WHEN IT'S SUNNY – AND SHELTER IF IT'S NOT **BY FRASER WILKIN**



REMILO PASTOROVANITELI/STYPI, AGONIAN/LODGE

### SERRE CHEVALIER, FRANCE

Serre Chevalier is the collective name for a string of villages that serve the largest skiing area in the southern French Alps.

Two things differentiate Serre Che (as it is known among locals) from other French mega-resorts such as Tignes and La Plagne. Firstly, it's not purpose-built. The resort bases are real communities and all the more attractive for it. Secondly, there are masses of trees – most of the



skiing is below the tree line, which sits at about 2,300m here, higher than in the northern Alps. So while the runs may be sheltered, they are still fairly snow-sure and with slopes reaching 2,700m, your chances of finding good snow are high.

### PEISEY-VALLANDRY, FRANCE

Peisey-Vallandry is a collection of low-rise chalet-style villages with the slopes forming part of the vast Les Arcs-Paradiski area. Les Arcs comprises four main resorts: Arc 1600 and 1800, which are on the same face of the mountain as Peisey-Vallandry, and Arc 1950 and 2000, which are in a separate but very snow-sure bowl on the other side of the ridge. The two sides are linked but Peisey-Vallandry has some of the best tree skiing in France and is by far the better place to be in a storm. Arc 1950 and 2000, on the other hand, can be very bleak in bad weather and you may become stuck here until it improves.



### LA TANIA, FRANCE

At 1,350m, La Tania may not be the highest resort in France but it's a great place to hedge your bets if you're worried about the weather.

If poor snow is the problem, gaining altitude is easy – you can reach the higher parts of Courchevel (2,700m) in less than 30 minutes. However, if it's the weather that's causing

the problem, then La Tania's slopes are the most densely wooded in the Three Valleys and rarely close – even in the fiercest storms.

What's more, they offer an excellent variety of gradients (from green to black), which makes it easy to keep skiers of all abilities amused when conditions make it impossible to leave the local area.

### MADONNA DI CAMPIGLIO, ITALY

This north-eastern corner of Italy is known for its erratic snowfall but Madonna di Campiglio, in the western Brenta Dolomites, gets more snow than resorts in nearby Sella Ronda, such as Selva and Arabba. Like most Italian resorts, snow-making (from cannons) is also excellent and the area now claims 95 per cent coverage, virtually assuring it a good early season base. When those big storms do roll in, there are plenty of woodland runs for skiers to shelter in.

### LA THUILE, ITALY

La Thuile is a quiet Italian village that shares an extensive area of snow-sure skiing with La Rosière in France. The French side is higher and gets more snow but it's also very exposed and prone to lift closures in high winds. La Thuile is lower but more sheltered and makes for a much better base in bad weather. Unlike La Rosière, it also has lots of trees that are home to some of its toughest runs.



All in all, this is one of the best resorts in Italy if you want to guarantee some skiing and, even better, there never seem to be any queues.