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Snow report - Saturday 29 December 2012

*Weathertoski.co.uk is reporting direct from **St Jean d'Aulps** in the Portes du Soleil.*

Today was glorious in the French Alps, with plenty of sunshine and pleasantly mild afternoon temperatures. The recent rain has made the very lowest runs here a bit icy, but above 1400m or so the snow is in excellent condition with some pockets of powder still up for grabs.

St Jean d'Aulps is a small family-friendly resort in the Portes du Soleil with its own very worthwhile ski area that is quite separate from the main circuit (**Avoriaz**, **Châtel** etc). We will be revealing more about what this resort has to offer in a special blog tomorrow.

On the whole, snow depths are still exceptional across much of the French and Swiss Alps – at least at altitude. The snow pack is also deep across the far west of Austria (such as **Lech**) and the far north-west of Italy (e.g. **Courmayeur**).

Elsewhere in the Alps, conditions are more "normal" but still generally good for the time of year, despite the recent mild weather.

Austria

The best conditions remain in the higher resorts of the west. **Lech** (105/190cm) had 30cm of fresh snow on Friday and is skiing superbly both on and off piste. **Ischgl** (70/150cm) also had a useful dump and reports excellent skiing at all levels. Snow depths are not quite so impressive further east but low-lying **Söll** (20/110cm) does have a little new snow and offers perfectly reasonable conditions for the time of year.

France

Conditions remain excellent across most French resorts though some of the lowest slopes are a bit icy due to recent rain. Today I skied in **St Jean d'Aulps** near **Morzine** where there was 180cm at 1800m and 80cm at 1450m. The snow was excellent up top but a bit icy below 1400m. You could, however, still ski all the way back to base at 945m – not always the case at this time of year!

Elsewhere in France, the high resorts of the Tarentaise are (not surprisingly) in fantastic shape with 105/280cm for **Les Arcs** and 120/230cm for **Val Thorens** – as is **Serre Chevalier** (70/160cm) a little further south.



Gorgeous weather in the Portes du Soleil today. This is St Jean d'Aulps.

Italy

The best conditions in Italy are in the far north-west led by **Courmayeur**

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8h

Italian village breaks world 24hr snowfall record!

[#snow](https://tinyurl.com/o4u6lmb)
pic.twitter.com/JqVV9dRD5C

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10h

Colder with some snow in the far eastern Alps. Mostly fine elsewhere.

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(80/160cm) and **La Thuile** (60/200cm), both of which saw fresh snow on Thursday and are way above par for the time of year. Further east, snow depths are not quite so impressive in **Cortina** (20/115cm), but here too there is some excellent skiing to be had, particularly at altitude.



Courmayeur has some of the best snow in Italy right now - www.regione.vda.it

Switzerland

Generally speaking conditions remain excellent across Switzerland despite some rain last week which has rendered the lowest slopes a little icy. **Villars** (pictured) is one such resort but higher up there is some excellent skiing to be had on a 140cm base.

Of the big name resorts, **Zermatt** (55/190cm) and **Verbier** (70/245cm) had some significant snowfall last week and are in as good a shape as anywhere right now. Further east, **St Moritz** (25/110cm) has not seen as much fresh and is more limited off-piste.



A little icy on the lower slopes of Villars today, but great conditions higher up - www.villars.ch

Rest of Europe

There hasn't been much snow in Andorra recently but on-piste, at least, conditions are still good in **Soldeu** (40/80cm). Bulgaria is also enjoying a steady start to the season with 30/100cm for **Bansko** and pockets of fresh powder at altitude. Scandinavia by contrast has had more in the way of fresh snow in recent days with 75/110cm now in **Hemsedal** (Norway) and 28/56cm for **Åre** (Sweden) - a big improvement on recent weeks.


USA

Most western US resorts have seen significant snow recently, including **Mammoth** (California) where all 150 trails are open and the upper snow pack is nearly 4m deep! The snow is not nearly so deep in Colorado but conditions here have still improved dramatically over the last couple of weeks with 5cm of fresh on a 107cm base at **Snowmass** (near **Aspen**).

Canada

December has been exceptionally snowy in western Canada and early season conditions remain excellent in the **Banff/Lake Louise** area where up top, the snow pack is 125cm deep. Further west **Whistler** also continues to impress with 190cm mid-mountain and excellent cover down to resort level.

Next snow report on Wednesday 2 January, but see [Today in the Alps](#) for daily updates

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