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Snow report

Updated: 1.15pm Thursday 6 March 2014

For the first time since December the Alps are about to string more than 3 days of (virtually) cloudless skies together. However, it is now March and with a much stronger sun, the implications are different.

On the whole, snow cover may still be good – exceptional in the south – but over the next few days an increasingly “spring-skiing” mind-set needs to be adopted. The best (grippiest) snow will be on higher north-facing slopes, the most variable snow (hard/icy in the morning, soft/slushy in the afternoon) will be on lower slopes more exposed to the sun.

It should also be noted that snow cover is precarious in parts of Austria and, at low altitude, won't take long to disappear completely if this warm spell continues for long (which it well might).

Austria

A little fresh snow has fallen across the Austrian resorts this week, but not as much as once forecast and, after today, the sun will be blazing for the foreseeable future.

This isn't brilliant news for the lower resorts, particularly in the north, which have struggled all season and now face a rapid deterioration of an already meagre snow pack. **Söll** has 35/65cm depending on altitude, **Mayrhofen** has 10/75cm.

For the best conditions over the next few days it's more a case of picking a resort with plenty of skiing above 2000m, rather than looking at snow depths per se. These might include **Obergurgl** (82/170cm) and **Ischgl** (40/110cm).



Still cloudy today in parts of Austria, but spring starts tomorrow (which won't help the meagre snow cover). This is Zell-am-See - Photo: foto-webcam.eu

France

There was fresh snow for all resorts (in varying quantities) earlier this week. Now, however, it is sunny and will remain so for the foreseeable future. This means increasingly spring-like conditions everywhere with hard or icy snow early in the day turning softer and/or slushy as the day progresses.

For the grippiest conditions you ideally want a resort with lots of north-facing slopes above 2000m – even 2500m if possible. **Val d'Isère/Tignes** (135/230cm), **Val Thorens** (155/255cm) and **Arc 1950/2000** (145/235cm) are as good as any in this situation.

That said, you shouldn't discount lower resorts in this type of weather, particularly given that there is still plenty of snow. It's just that the window of opportunity for good snow each day in the likes of **Morzine** (45/310cm) will be briefer.

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Skiing in June? Yep, there are plenty of good options in the Alps! tinyurl.com/llt6xzy



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Perfect weather in the French Alps today. This is Alpe d'Huez with Les 2 Alpes in the background - Photo: alpedhuez.com

Italy

Italy has had a truly outstanding season and snow cover is fantastic across the board. However, now that spring is setting in, snow depths don't count for as much as they did earlier in the season.

In short, spring rules apply and for the best conditions you need altitude and, where possible north-facing slopes. **Cervinia** (120/360cm) doesn't have much of the latter but it does have plenty of the former which means good snow can still be found over the next few days.

The Monterosa region (**Champoluc, Gressoney, Alagna**) is another good bet with lots of high slopes - **Alagna** currently has 248/341cm depending on altitude. However, expect more variable snow and plenty of afternoon slush in resorts such as **Selva**, where most of the skiing is below 2000m.

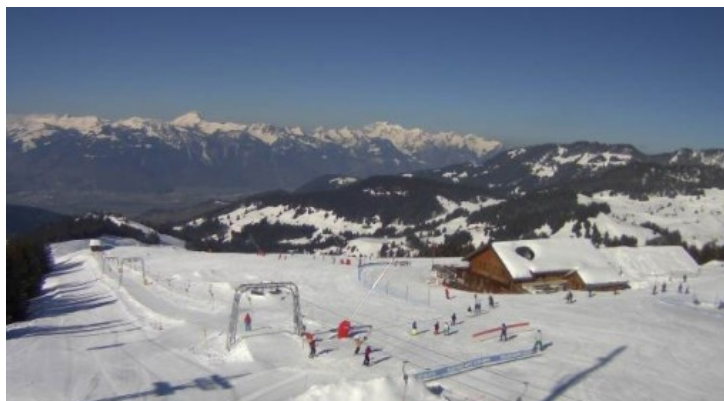


Spring has sprung in the Italian Alps today, but there is still masses of snow in Livigno - Photo: livigno.eu

Switzerland

Like everywhere else in the Alps, Swiss resorts will see lots of spring sunshine over the next few days which means you need to aim high for the most consistent snow conditions. Our picks would be **Zermatt** (105/385cm) and **Saas-Fee** (150/440cm) whose average ski height is unrivalled in Switzerland.

However, even in lower resorts such as **Wengen** (60/155cm) there is lots of fabulous skiing to be had over the next few days, so long as you are in the spring-skiing mind-set.



Perfect weather in the western Alps today. This is Villars - Photo: villars.ch

Rest of Europe

The Pyrenees have had a great season and further snow this week. However, just like the Alps spring is setting in which means variable snow conditions over the next few weeks despite the impressive snow depths. **Arcalis** (190/290cm) in Andorra has some of the highest shadiest slopes in these parts.

Bulgaria has had fresh snow which has at least temporarily improved conditions in **Borovets** (70/100cm) after a difficult season.

Up in Scandinavia, **Åre** (Sweden) has also had a relatively modest season but on-piste at least conditions are still fine with 45-61cm of snow depending on altitude. On the whole, Norway is faring better with 130/250cm in **Lillehammer**.

It is turning milder in Scotland but snow depths continue to astound – at least in the western resorts – where **Glencoe** has upwards of 5m up top.

USA

Conditions are very good across most of Colorado with fresh snow in recent days for both **Vail** (175cm upper mountain) and **Aspen** (127/254cm). More impressive still is **Jackson Hole** (292/340cm) where over 1 metre of snow has fallen in the last week.

Deepest of all, however, is in the Pacific north-west where **Mt Baker** has had massive dumps in recent days and the upper base is now close to 5 metres.

Canada

Canadian resorts have also seen fresh snow which means excellent conditions in **Whistler** (227cm upper mountain) with lots more in the forecast. Further inland, **Banff/Lake Louise** (125/187cm) are also in great nick both on and off-piste with further flurries expected.



Still looking wintry across much of Canada. This is Lake Louise - Photo: skilouise.com

Next detailed snow forecast will be on Thursday 13 March 2014, but see [Today in the Alps](#) for daily updates