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Latest snow report

Updated: 2.15pm Wednesday 11 November 2015

It has been exceptionally warm in the Alps over the last few days, with freezing levels close to 4000m, and temperatures in some of the lower valleys getting into the low 20°C's.

Snow conditions on the glaciers have been quite good, especially in the western Alps (e.g. **Tignes**, **Zermatt** and **Saas-Fee**), which have seen virtually wall to wall sunshine.

Below glacier level there are still some pockets of snow left over from the October storms - mostly on north facing slopes above 2300-2500m along the main alpine ridge. In the vast majority of cases, however, non-glacial resorts still need lots more snow before they can even consider preparing for the coming season.

Before you panic, though, it is well worth considering that it's still only November and the situation is far from unusual. Indeed, some of the best winters haven't got going properly until well into December. What's more, a pattern change is in sight, with an increasing chance of some snowfalls for the Alps later in the month.

We should stress that this is still far from certain but as things stand, there is cause for optimism.

Meanwhile, across the pond it's a very different story, with lots of new snow resulting in a flurry of openings in the western US and Canada.

Austria

Snow conditions on the glaciers in Austria have been pretty good this week, even if it has been a bit cloudy at times.

The greatest extent and variety of terrain remains in **Hintertux** (110cm upper base), **Sölden** (75cm upper base) and **Stubai** (80cm upper base), all of which offer at least 30km of pistes.

A dusting of snow is possible this weekend, but all eyes are on later next week when some more significant snowfalls are possible. Non-glacial Obergurgl is scheduled to open tomorrow, but on a very limited basis.



Snow cover looking patchy even on the upper slopes of Ischgl, with less than three weeks to go until its 28 November opening - Photo: ischgl.com

France

Tignes is currently the only ski resort open in France, with around half a dozen lifts open on the Grande Motte glacier, where the base is 50cm deep. Snow conditions have been pretty good this week, but the long Double M run down to resort (sometimes open at this time of year) remains closed.

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



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Val Thorens is due to open on 21 November, but is looking relatively snowless right now. The forecast is promising for later next week - fingers crossed.



Not looking especially wintry in Tignes this afternoon! - Photo: tignes.net

Italy

Skiing in Italy is mostly still confined to three resorts - **Cervinia** (110cm upper base), **Val Senales** (75cm upper base) and little **Sulden** (50cm upper base) in the Sud-Tirol, which did particularly well from the October storms.

Good weather has made for some very pleasant skiing this week, but a return to winter would be welcome.

As elsewhere in the Alps, the forecast for later next week is encouraging, but it is still far too early to promise any significant snow.



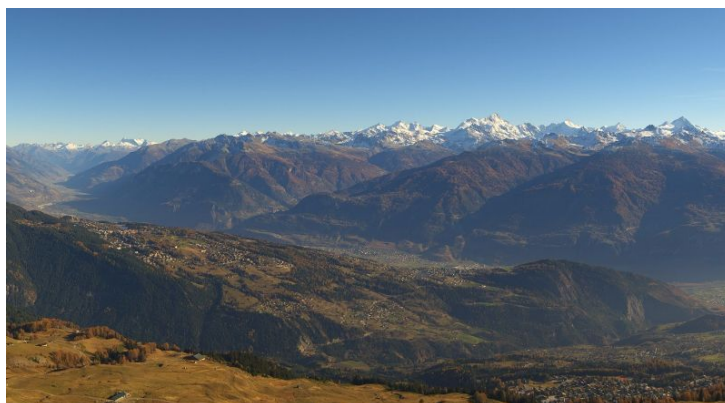
Sestriere is one of the few resorts to have any snow left close to the village - Photo: vialattea.it

Switzerland

Zermatt (130cm upper base) and **Saas-Fee** (90cm upper base) continue to offer the greatest extent and variety of terrain in Switzerland, and have been skiing superbly this week thanks to the beautiful weather.

A number of more limited options are also available, including **Glacier 3000** near Les Diablerets and **Diavolezza** near St Moritz. However, **Engelberg** keeps putting its opening date back, and is unlikely to offering any skiing until later in the month.

No significant snow is expected in Switzerland until later next week at the earliest.



View across the Rhône valley from Anzère - Photo: anzere.ch

USA

Significant snowfalls have allowed a clutch of openings in the western US. In most cases the extent of skiable terrain is still limited, but it's an evolving situation and certainly a very promising start compared with recent winters.

Mammoth Mountain (12 open trails), in California, has seen nearly 1m of snow over the last week, with upper base depths of 107cm.

Meanwhile, in Colorado, **Copper Mountain** also has fresh snow, and is operating two trails on a 50cm upper base.



Good start for Mammoth, after its recent run of poor winters - Photo: facebook.com/mammothmountain

Canada

Most western Canadian resorts have also seen plenty of snow over the last few days.

Only a handful of ski areas are currently open (e.g. **Lake Louise**, three trails, 40cm upper base), but lots more are expected to follow suit over the next 2-3 weeks. These include **Whistler**, on 26 November, where there is already plenty of snow on the top half of the mountain and further significant falls are expected over the next week.

Next full snow report will be on Thursday 19 November 2015, but see [Today in the Alps](#) for regular updates