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Latest snow report

Updated: 1pm Thursday 19 November 2015

Welcome to our detailed weekly snow report for the Alps and North America.

After nearly three weeks of mostly sunny and unusually warm weather in the Alps, winter will return with a vengeance this weekend.

The action begins tomorrow (Friday) with lots of snow above 2000m in the northern and western Alps (e.g. Tarentaise, Mt Blanc, Valais, Bernese Oberland). However, with milder air still in place, expect plenty of rain lower down before the colder air really starts to bite on Friday night.

Saturday and Sunday (especially Saturday) will see lots more snow, mostly in the northern half of the Alps, but this time to very low altitudes. With one or two exceptions, the southern Alps will see less snow from this first wave of storms (see [Today in the Alps](#) for more detail).

Across the pond, the transition towards winter has been more progressive, with a string of resorts now at least partially open thanks to multiple November snowfalls.

Austria

All eight of Austria's glacier ski areas are open (subject to the weather conditions) as well as non-glacial **Obergurgl** and, in a very limited capacity, **Kitzbühel** (one run only).

The most varied and extensive skiing is still to be found in **Hintertux** (110cm upper base), **Sölden** (73cm upper base) and **Stubai** (80cm upper base), all of which offer at least 30km of pistes.

High winds and snow are expected over the weekend, heaviest in the west (Vorarlberg, Tirol). It will also turn much colder everywhere, which will allow the snow cannons to operate - some compensation for those areas further east that might miss the heaviest of the snow.




An almost snowless Innsbruck valley today - Photo: foto-webcam.eu


France

Tignes (50cm upper base) remains the only French resort open at the moment, with skiing limited to the glacier after the last three weeks of exceptionally mild weather.


Val Thorens was due to open this weekend, but this has been put back a week due to a lack of snow - ironic given the forecast, but it takes four days to prepare the pistes, we are told.

Right now there is little, if any, natural snow below about 2500m, but this is all about to change with the major storm due to hit the French Alps on Friday, which will continue for much of the weekend.


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



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It may rain for a while below about 2000m on Friday, but will turn much colder everywhere by Saturday with snow, heaviest in the north, down to low levels. Expect 1m or more above 2200m in some parts of the northern Alps by Sunday (e.g. the Tarentaise and Mont Blanc regions).

The southern Alps will see less snow, especially in the far south (e.g. **Isola 2000**), which may see next to nothing, but it will turn bitterly cold everywhere.



This could be the last day Tignes looks like this until the spring - Photo: tignes.net

Italy

There are still only three resorts open for skiing in Italy: **Cervinia** (110cm upper base) with its links to **Zermatt**, **Val Senales** (75cm upper base) and little non-glacial **Sulden** (50cm upper base).

With the exception of some north-western resorts (such as **Cervinia**, **La Thuile** and **Courmayeur**), Italy is expected to miss the heaviest of the snow this time round. It will, however, turn much colder over the weekend, which will at least allow them to start exploiting their huge snow-making potential.



Skiing in the Plateau Rosa area high above Cervinia - Photo: cervinia.it

Switzerland

With little if any snow now left below 2500m, only a handful of glacier areas are currently open in Switzerland, by far the most extensive and varied being **Zermatt** (130cm upper base) and **Saas-Fee** (68cm upper base).

However, change is afoot with a big storm expected to deliver serious quantities of snow across many Swiss resorts between Friday and Sunday. Don't be surprised to see rain below about 2000m for a time on Friday, before it turns much colder with snow descending to all levels on Saturday.

All areas could see significant snow, but the greatest accumulations (possibly close to 1m at altitude) are likely in the Valais (e.g. **Zermatt**, **Verbier**).



Waiting for snow in Klosters - Photo: davos.ch

USA

November has been a snowy month for most western US ski resorts, with a number of resorts now at least partially open for the season.

Of the big name resorts, **Mammoth** (California) is doing as well as any, having already had more snow this Autumn than in the whole of last season. 54 of a possible 150 trails are open and the upper base is 107cm deep.

There has also been plenty of snow this November in Colorado, although some of the major resorts are still yet to open. One exception is **Breckenridge**, where six trails are open and the upper base is 59cm deep.

Further south, notoriously snowy **Wolf Creek** is the only US resort we know to be 100% open right now (77 trails), with 80cm of new snow in the last week and an upper base depth of 120cm.

Canada

Most western Canadian resorts are also off to a good start, although only a handful have chosen to open just yet.

Lake Louise is one of the best bets at the moment, with 41 trails open, fresh snow and an upper base depth of around 86cm. **Big White** is another good option, with a choice of 22 trails and upper snow depths of 117cm.

Whistler also has decent snow cover on the upper half of the mountain (77cm) and will open today, ahead of schedule.



Lake Louise has seen well over 1m of snow in the last week - Photo: facebook.com/Lake Louise

Next full snow report will be on Thursday 26 November 2015, but see [Today in the Alps](#) for regular updates