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Latest snow report

Updated: 1.30pm Monday 21 December 2015

Snow conditions remain poor across most of the Alps with no significant new snow in prospect for the next week at least.

Many people have reported some perfectly enjoyable skiing in recent days, but this is in no small measure down to the fine weather and lack of crowds. Today it is cloudier in the north-western Alps, with even some rain at low altitude, which has thrown the situation sharply back into focus. The sun will be back tomorrow though, and much of the Alps will enjoy plenty of fine and sunny weather over the next few days.

It still pays to aim high, and the best skiing conditions are in resorts with plenty of slopes above 2200m. Glacier only areas aside, this includes (but is not limited to) **Val d'Isère, Tignes, Val Thorens, Courchevel, La Plagne, Arc 1950/2000, Verbier, Engelberg, Ischgl** and **Sölden**. In the southern Alps, and low down generally, resorts are heavily or sometimes entirely reliant on snow-making.

Across the pond, it's an entirely different story with excellent snow conditions in most western US and Canadian resorts.

Austria

Glaciers aside, the best snow conditions in Austria are in the higher western resorts, such as **Ischgl** (0/35cm) and **Lech** (30/35cm). However, even here, snow depths are very modest and more snow is urgently needed.

Further east, and especially at low altitude, snow cover is patchier or in some cases on-existent. That said, areas like the **Ski Welt** (e.g. **Söll, Ellmau**) and **Saalbach-Hinterglemm** have managed to open a decent number of runs on little more than 20-30cm of largely artificial snow.



Half reasonable snow cover at altitude in the Arlberg region. This is St Anton - Photo: stantonamarlberg.com

France

The best snow conditions in France are in the higher northern resorts. These include **Val d'Isère** (30/60cm), **Val Thorens** (50/90cm) and **La Plagne** (5/80cm), all of which have plenty of skiing above 2200m.

However, lower lying resorts such as **Morzine** and **Megève** (0/40cm) are really struggling, with very little snow below 1600m, and only a small percentage of their pistes open.

The southern French Alps (roughly south of **Les 2 Alpes**) also have very little snow and are heavily reliant on artificial help to open any skiing at all. **Serre Chevalier** (0/30cm) has just 18 of 62 runs open, while **Isola 2000** (where there is no natural snow at all) has just eight.

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



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A bit of rain in Les Gets today, but the sun should be back tomorrow - Photo:lesgets.com

Italy

Most Italian ski resorts have little or no natural snow and are heavily reliant on artificial help.

In the **Dolomiti Superski** region, for example, which includes the likes of **Selva**, **Corvara** and **Cortina**, 692km of pistes are now open on a man-made base of about 30cm. It may seem less than ideal but this area actually offers by far the highest concentration of open pistes in Italy, if not the Alps.

The most natural snow in Italy is in the higher north-western resorts such as **Cervinia** (5/120cm) but, even here, cover is extremely modest - the 120cm upper base is measured on the glacier, and there is no off-piste to speak of.



No natural snow, but still plenty of skiing possible in the Dolomites - Photo: dolomitisuperski.com

Switzerland

The best skiing conditions in Switzerland can be found in resorts with plenty of terrain above 2200m, such as **Zermatt** (0/125cm), **Verbier** (5/65cm) and **Engelberg** (35/155cm). However, even here, snow cover is very modest for mid-December and there is no serious off-piste to speak of.

Below 2000m, snow cover is now very patchy. **Wengen** has 0/30cm depending on altitude, while **Villars** has 10/45cm.

The far south-east of Switzerland also has very little snow, even at altitude. **St Moritz** (0/15cm) has only managed to open a handful of pistes so far, mostly on artificial snow.



Meagre cover in the Swiss Engadin. This is Scuol - Photo: scuol.ch

Rest of Europe

The Pyrenees have been suffering from the same mild and snowless weather that has afflicted the Alps in recent weeks. However, at altitude, snow conditions are comparable to some of the better parts of the Alps, with 25/65cm depending on altitude in Spain's **Baqueira Beret** and 20/70cm in Andorra's **Arcalis**.

Early season snow conditions have been steady, rather than spectacular, in most Norwegian resorts, with base depths of 20/62cm in **Hemsedal** and 75/75cm in **Geilo**. The best snow in Scandinavia is probably up in Finland's **Ylläs**, where temperatures are lower and there is 60cm of settled snow on the mountain.



Surprisingly good skiing still possible at altitude in the Pyrenees. This is the Grand Tourmalet area - Photo: grandtourmalet.com

USA

Snow conditions are generally excellent in the western US, certainly compared to Europe.

Utah has recovered well after a slow start, with masses of fresh snow in **Snowbird** (115cm mid-mountain).

Much of Colorado also reports cold, powdery snow conditions, with 74/112cm at **Aspen Highlands**.



Snow conditions are infinitely better in the western US. This Mammoth, California - Photo: facebook.com/MammothMountain

Canada

The excellent start to the season continues in Canada, even if snowfalls in most western Canadian resorts have been modest over the last few days.

One exception is **Whistler** (204cm mid-mountain), where another half a metre has fallen at altitude over the last 48 hours with plenty more in the forecast.

Further inland, all five lifts in **Revelstoke** are open with 70/163cm of settled snow depending on altitude.

Next full snow report will be on Thursday 24 December 2015, but see [Today in the Alps](#) for regular updates