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Latest snow report

Updated: 6.30pm Monday 21 November 2016

Snow conditions are highly variable in the Alps right now. One thing is for sure though, they are no longer exceptional for November, which they were little more than a week ago. The reason for this turnaround is simple - it has been mild, even very mild at times, and will continue to be so for several days to come. It will also be very windy this week which will severely hamper lift operations at times.

The best snow cover remains at altitude in the north-western Alps (e.g. Val d'Isère, Val Thorens, Chamonix, Zermatt, Saas-Fee). These resorts still have plenty of snow high up and, above 2000m, are more or less secure for the season. Lower down it is a different story, with a steady thaw right across the Alps in recent days. What's more, this thaw will be accelerated on the northern side of the Alps this week by a strong Foehn wind.

It's not all bad news though! It is snowing at altitude in some south-western parts of the Alps and will continue to do so in places all week! The rain/snow limit will be quite high - between 1600m and 1900m today, and rising to 2000m or so tomorrow and on Wednesday - but at altitude some extreme snowfall totals are possible over the next few days.

Resorts in the firing line include Zermatt, Saas-Fee and Airolo in Switzerland, and Cervinia, the Monte Rosa region and Macugnaga in Italy, all of which could see 1-2m of new snow above 2400m by the end of the week, perhaps even more.

Some French resorts will also see significant snow at high altitude, especially in the south, but perhaps also further north close to the Italian border (e.g. Bonneval-sur-Arc, Val d'Isère).

Austria

The vast majority of skiing in Austria is still confined to the glacier resorts, though some of these - including **Hintertux** (25/105cm) and **Sölden** (10/120cm) - now have a number of non-glacial runs open.

The biggest entirely non-glacial name up and running is **Obergurgl** (2/40cm), with **Ischgl** (0/60cm) taking over that mantle on Thursday. Lower down though snow cover is patchy again and, with the Foehn blowing for most of the week, will become virtually non-existent by next weekend.



Good early snow cover at altitude in Ischgl, which opens on Thursday - Photo: ischgl.com

France

There is still plenty of snow at altitude in France, especially in the northern Alps, but lower down, cover is now patchy again.

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Only two French ski resorts are currently open on a daily basis - **Tignes** (40/110cm) and **Val Thorens** (90/150cm) - though **Val d'Isère** (15/92cm) and **Montgenèvre** (40/70cm) will join them this weekend.

There have also been a handful of recent weekend openings, such as **Alpe d'Huez** (45/100cm) and **La Clusaz**, but with the ongoing mild weather there may not be many new options this weekend.



Good snow cover for November in Montgenèvre, which opens daily as of this weekend Photo: montgenevre.com

Italy

A number of Italian ski resorts are partially open, at least at weekends, but the best bet on a daily basis remains (weather-permitting) **Cervinia** (45/130cm), where a lot of snow is expected to fall over the next few days.

Two other decent options are **Passo Tonale** (40/80cm) and the glacier area of **Val Senales** (10/90cm).



Good snow up top in Sestriere, but cover is thin lower down - 21 November 2016 - Photo: vialattea.it

Switzerland

Zermatt (10/100cm) and **Saas-Fee** (20/120cm) remain the best options for now though unfavourable weather conditions may mean that not much is open over the next few days. However, when skies do clear these are two of only a handful of Swiss resorts that will have seen significant fresh snow at altitude this week.

Other more limited Swiss options include **Davos** (5/30cm) and **Anzère** (30/110cm).



Fresh snow today in Airolo in southern Switzerland - 21 November 2016 - Photo: airolo.ch

Rest of Europe

There is still not a great deal open in Europe beyond the Alps, and snow cover is still on the patchy side in the Pyrenees.

Some skiing is possible in in Finland, though mainly on artificial snow – **Ruka** now has a base 13-30cm deep depending on altitude.

You can also ski in a limited capacity in both Sweden and Norway, with **Hemsedal** (40cm upper base) as good a bet as anywhere in Scandinavia right now.



Only the highest slopes have decent snow cover in the Pyrenees right now. This is Caunterets, which plans to open on 3 December 2016 – Photo: caunterets.com

USA

There are still only a handful of resorts operational in the western US but, with most areas now seeing (or about to see) new snow, it's an improving picture and more openings are expected later this week.

Right now **Mammoth** (California) has a dusting of new snow on a 95cm upper base, while **Copper Mountain** (Colorado) has a 45cm mostly man-made upper base.



Fresh snow in Heavenly, California, which hopes to open on Wednesday – Photo: skiheavenly.com

Canada

Sunshine Village (80/100cm) remains the best option in western Canada, though you can now ski in nearby **Lake Louise** (52/59cm). **Whistler** (94cm upper base) should also open on Thursday.

**Next full snow report will be on Thursday 24 November 2016,
but see [Today in the Alps](#) for regular updates**