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Latest snow report

Updated: 4.20pm Thursday 1 December 2016

Snow conditions in the Alps are very mixed as we begin December.

Thanks to last week's big storms, conditions are excellent at altitude in the western/south-western Alps, including resorts such as Val d'Isère, Tignes, Val Thorens, Montgenèvre, Alpe d'Huez, the Monte Rosa region, Cervinia, Zermatt and Saas-Fee. We stress that this is "at altitude" because, even here, snow cover is often patchy below 1800-2000m.

Elsewhere in the Alps there is also reasonable cover at altitude, even if snow depths are less impressive. Examples of resorts that missed the big "south-western" storms last week, but which can still offer some perfectly good piste skiing, include Ischgl, Obergurgl, Obertauern, Livigno, Kronplatz, Engelberg and Grimentz.

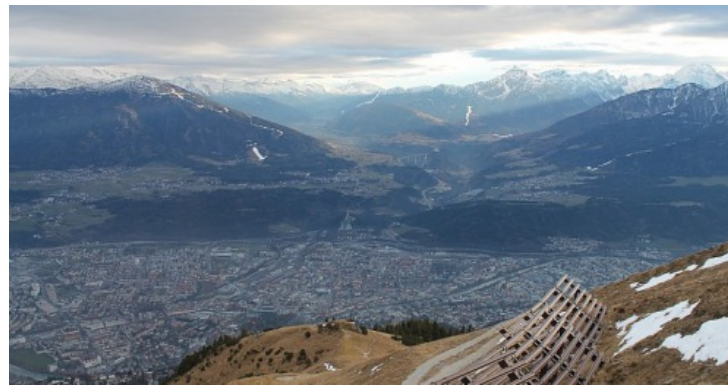
Lower down in the Alps, however, natural snow cover is now very patchy (as in Morzine and Villars, for example) and, except for a little snow in the far north-eastern Alps over the next 24 hours, there is no major dump in prospect for at least 8 to 10 days.

That said, snow-making is underway - on an industrial scale in the eastern Alps (e.g. Dolomites), but a bit more sporadic in the lower resorts of the western Alps, where freezing levels are that bit higher. There is still plenty of it going on though, especially at night.

Austria

Glaciers aside, there are now lots of partial openings across Austria. However, natural snow cover remains modest and artificial snow is very much in the mix.

The greatest extent of skiing in Austria is currently in **Ischgl** (0/40cm), where an impressive 125km of pistes are now open. **Obertauern** (30/60cm) is another good entirely non-glacial option but, generally speaking, more snow would be welcome, especially lower down.



View across Innsbruck. Note the lack of low altitude snow, as is the case across much of the Alps - 1 December 2016 - Photo: foto-webcam.eu

France

Tignes (42/155cm) and **Val d'Isère** (5/150cm) still offer as good an option as anywhere in Europe right now, thanks to last week's big storms, with about half of their 300km combined area now skiable.

Val Thorens (85/150cm) is currently second in France in terms of extent of skiing available, but **Montgenèvre** (70/130cm) has also been offering some excellent skiing this week, and lots of resorts will partially open this weekend.

Like everywhere else in the Alps though, snow cover remains patchy below 1800-2000m, with lots more snow needed in the lower resorts to settle any pre-Christmas nerves.

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Excellent snow cover in Montgenèvre, even at resort level – 1 December 2016 – Photo: montgenevre.com

Italy

The western Italian Alps (at altitude) currently have the best natural snow cover in Italy. **Cervinia** (35/160cm) still leads the way with 66km of pistes (shared with Zermatt) open today, but much more is expected to open this weekend.

The Monte Rosa region (**Champoluc**, **Gressoney**, **Alagna**) also has a lot of snow at altitude and will be open this weekend with up to 180cm of settled snow on its upper slopes. Further east there is less natural snow, but **Livigno** (0/50cm) is open on a daily basis.

Snow-making is currently transforming the pistes in the Dolomites, where **Kronplatz** (20/40cm) has about half of its 32 lifts running today.



Deep snow at high altitude in the Monte Rosa region – 1 December 2016 – Photo: monterosa-ski.com

Switzerland

Snow conditions in Switzerland are best at altitude in the south, especially in **Zermatt** (0/110cm) and **Saas-Fee** (10/135cm), though snow cover at resort level remains patchy.

There are lots of partial openings elsewhere in Switzerland, including **Davos** (0/30cm), **Verbier** (10/65cm) and **Grimentz** (20/50cm), with more in the pipeline this weekend. As with elsewhere in the Alps, however, snow cover is patchy below 1800-2000m, with very little new snow in the medium term forecast.



Magnificent weather in Zermatt, which is set to continue for some time to come – 1 December 2016 – Photo: zermatt.ch

Rest of Europe

In the Pyrenees, Andorra's **Pas de La Casa** (15/35cm) is open and offering decent piste skiing, despite its modest snow depths. It will be joined by neighbouring **Soldeu** tomorrow. Spain's **Baqueira Beret** (5/25cm) is also offering some reasonable piste skiing but, generally speaking, the Pyrenees could do with some more snow, especially lower down.

Lots of Scandinavian ski resorts are now at least partially open. Norway's **Geilo** has a healthy 80cm mid-mountain base, despite only very modest recent snowfalls. The snow is that bit fresher in Sweden's **Åre**, where the mid-mountain base is now 51cm. Finland's **Levi** (40cm mid-mountain base) is also in good shape, with more snow in the forecast.

At present the Scottish ski resorts do not have enough snow to offer any lift-served skiing.



Excellent snow conditions in Levi in Finland – 1 December 2016 – Photo: levi.fi

USA

Conditions are much improved in the western US compared with a week or two ago, with new snow for most resorts and more in the forecast.

With 75cm of new snow earlier this week, Utah's **Snowbird** (105cm mid-mountain base) is skiing particularly well right now. **Jackson Hole** (64/120cm) is also in great shape, despite the limited number of lifts open.

Colorado resorts have generally seen more modest snowfalls, but there is still good skiing to be found in both **Breckenridge** (46cm upper base) and **Telluride** (53cm upper base).




Deep powdery snow in Snowbird this week – 1 December 2016 – Photo: facebook.com/snowbirdUT

Canada

Conditions are excellent in **Whistler** (172cm upper base) at the moment, with well over 1m of new snow in the last week and more forecast over the next few days, before it turns sunnier but much colder early next week. 18 of the area's 26 lifts are now up and running

Further inland, the best bet remains **Sunshine Village** (88cm upper base), near Banff, where over 70 trails are open and snow is also forecast. A handful of other western Canadian resorts are also open with lots more due to join them this weekend.

Next full snow report will be on Monday 5 December 2016,
but see [Today in the Alps](#) for regular updates

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