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Latest snow report

Updated: 4.15pm Monday 5 December 2016

Snow conditions in the Alps remain perfectly reasonable at altitude for early December. Thanks to artificial snow, it is also possible to find some good piste skiing quite low down, especially in the eastern Alps. However, all this cannot disguise the fact that natural snow cover is generally very patchy below 2000m, with no significant snow in the Alpine forecast for at least a week – possibly much longer.

If we were to pick our top five resorts to head to this week it would be Tignes, Val d'Isère, Cervinia, Val Thorens and Zermatt. However, there are numerous other good options such as Montgenèvre, Alpe d'Huez, the Monte Rosa region, Courmayeur, Saas-Fee, Sölden and Kaprun to name just a few. Expect plenty of sunshine and hard-packed pistes over the next few days.

Off-piste opportunities are generally quite limited, but (with some hiking and a good guide) you can still find some untracked lines in certain resorts, such as Val d'Isère and Tignes and the Monte Rosa region, for example.

Meanwhile, across the pond, Whistler is experiencing one of its best starts in many years...

Austria

Lots of Austrian ski resorts are now partially open, even lower ones such as **Söll** (20/40cm) and **Saalbach** (30/50cm), thanks to comprehensive snow-making.

Higher up, **Ischgl** (0/40cm) offers a very impressive 150km of pistes but the very best snow right now is in resorts with glaciers, such as **Sölden** (10/130cm), **Kaprun** (25/70cm) and **Hintertux** (25/105cm).

Despite the numerous options available in Austria, snow cover (like everywhere else in the Alps) remains thin or patchy at low altitude, with no new snow in the forecast this week.



Good piste skiing in southern Austria. This is Turracher Höhe – 5 December 2016 – Photo: turracherhoehe.at

France

Numerous French ski resorts are now partially open though the best snow conditions continue to be found in **Val d'Isère** (5/145cm) and **Tignes** (40/150cm), thanks to a combination of altitude and the big storm that delivered so much snow in November.

Other decent bets include **Val Thorens** (60/135cm), **Montgenèvre** (70/180cm) and **Les Deux Alpes** (0/120cm). Lower down, however, snow cover remains patchy and no new snow is forecast this week.

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Perfect weather and great snow in Tignes – 5 December 2016 – Photo: tignes.net

Italy

Dozens of Italian ski resorts are now partially open, although artificial snow is playing a major role in most cases. Nowhere is this better illustrated than in the Dolomiti Superski area (e.g **Cortina**, **Kronplatz**, **Sella Ronda**) where 400km of pistes are now open with an upper base of between 20cm and 40cm.

The best natural snow cover (and snow conditions), however, remains at altitude in the north-western Italian Alps, in resorts such as **Cervinia** (35/160cm) and the **Monte Rosa** region (20/100cm). No new snow is expected this week.



Great weather for snow-making in the Dolomites. This is Carezza – 5 December 2016 – Photo: dolomitisuperski.com

Switzerland

Snow cover in Switzerland remains reasonable at altitude but is generally very patchy below 2000m.

The best skiing is to be found high up in **Zermatt** (0/110cm) and **Saas-Fee** (10/135cm). However, numerous other resorts are partially open - often with considerable artificial help - including **St Moritz** (0/50cm), **Grimentz** (20/50cm) and **Davos** (0/30cm). No new snow is expected this week.



Only patchy snow cover in relatively low-lying Villars – 5 December 2016 – Photo: villars.ch

Rest of Europe

A number of resorts are now partially open in the Pyrenees though, generally speaking, snow depths remain very modest. Two resorts which can offer some good piste skiing at the moment are France's **Cauterets** (15/35cm) and Andorra's **Pas de La Casa** (15/35cm).

Lots of resorts are now partially open in Scandinavia, including Sweden's **Åre** (45cm mid-mountain base) and Finland's **Ruka** (32cm mid-mountain base).

Some of the best snow conditions, however, are in Norway's **Oppdal** where 15cm of new snow fell on Saturday and the upper base is now 70cm deep.

There is currently insufficient snow to ski in Scotland.



Reasonable snow cover at altitude in the Pyrenees. This is Cauterets - 5 December 2016 - Photo: cauterets.com

USA

Snow conditions are quite mixed across the western US. The heaviest of the recent snow has fallen in the Pacific north-west, where resorts such as **Mt Baker** (277cm upper base) are in fabulous shape

There has been less new snow over the last few days further south, but you can still find some excellent skiing in **Snowbird** (101cm mid-mountain base) and **Jackson Hole** (120cm upper base).

Snow depths are generally more modest in Colorado, with 45cm of settled snow mid-mountain in **Vail**, for example.

Canada

So far this season, 3.3 m of snow has already fallen in **Whistler** (162cm upper base), where fabulous early season conditions reported from top to bottom. Temperatures are also very low and will fall further mid-week before it gradually turns milder (but again snowy) towards the weekend.

Snow conditions are also excellent further inland, though it will be even colder this week, with temperatures of -25°C possible in the **Banff/Lake Louise** area, where **Sunshine Village** now has 83 open trails and a mid-mountain base of 115cm.



Fabulous start to the season in Whistler - 5 December 2016 - Photo: facebook.com/whistlerblackcomb

**Next full snow report will be on Thursday 8 December 2016,
but see [Today in the Alps](#) for regular updates**