



Latest snow report

Latest snow forecast

Season progress report

Who got the most snow?

The complete guide to...

The snow quality equation

What is the Foehn?

Avoiding rain

Avalanche awareness

Archive

2016-17

2015-16

2014-15

2013-14

2012-13

### Latest snow report

Updated: 4.30pm Thursday 8 December 2016

So the question on everyone's lips right now is when will it next snow in the Alps?

The short answer is 'on Monday', but only in modest quantities and also only in the eastern Austrian Alps. Everyone else will have to wait, though there are hints of a more significant change in the weather pattern sometime between 17 and 21 December 2016.

In the meantime, it should be emphasised that there is still plenty of very enjoyable skiing around at the moment, at least if you are happy to stay on the pistes. The best snow conditions remain in the higher resorts of the western and south-western Alps, including Val d'Isère, Tignes, Val Thorens, Montgenèvre, Isola 2000, Sestriere, Courmayeur, the Monte Rosa region, Pila, Zermatt and Saas-Fee. There are also dozens of other options but, as a rule (glaciers aside), the further north and east you go, the more you will be reliant on man-made snow.

In short, the snow situation in the Alps is not ideal right now, but for most resorts it is a long way from being disastrous and in many high resorts it is still pretty good.

Meanwhile, snow conditions are generally better across the pond, especially in Canada where Whistler is enjoying its best early season skiing for many years...

#### Austria

Glaciers aside there are plenty of skiing options in Austria right now, even if most of them are heavily dependent on artificial snow.

Among the more extensive possibilities are **Ischgl** (0/40cm), **Söll** (20/40cm), **Schladming** (40/100cm) and **Obertauern** (30/60cm). All these resorts, and many more, are providing some perfectly enjoyable piste skiing but cannot escape the fact that off-piste possibilities are very limited and that snow cover remains patchy lower down, especially in the west of the country.

A little new snow is possible in the eastern Austrian Alps on Monday (e.g. **Schladming**), but most regions will need to wait at least a week (or probably more) before any hope of a more significant pattern change.



Good piste skiing despite the modest cover in Ischgl - 8 December 2016 - Photo: ischgl.com

#### France

Lots of ski resorts are now partially open in France despite very little natural snow cover below 1800-2000m.

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The best snow conditions are in the high resorts close to the Italian border, such as **Val d'Isère** (5/140cm) and **Montgenèvre** (70/180cm). **Val Thorens** (60/135cm) and **Les 2 Alpes** (0/120cm) are two other good options right now though off-piste opportunities remain extremely limited.

Resorts where most of the skiing is below 2000m, such as **Morzine** and **Megève**, are showing far too much greenery, however, and need a lot more snow before they can start thinking about a successful start to the season.



Montgenèvre has some of the best natural snow cover in the Alps right now - 8 December 2016 - Photo: montgenevre.com

### Italy

Natural snow cover remains best at altitude in the western Italian Alps, including resorts such as **Cervinia** (35/160cm), **Sestriere** (40/120cm), **Pila** (20/200cm) and the **Monte Rosa** region (0/220cm), though even here snow is patchy below 1800m or so.

Elsewhere, there is plenty of good piste skiing to be had though, generally speaking, the further east you head the more important snow-making becomes. The Super Dolomiti area (**Cortina**, **Selva**, **Alta Badia** etc.) has an astonishing 622km of pistes open today thanks largely to man-made snow.

No new snow is forecast in Italy for at least a week, possibly even longer.



Excellent snow cover at altitude in Sestriere - 8 December 2016 - Photo: vialattea.it

### Switzerland

Snow cover in Switzerland remains very patchy low down which means that the best skiing right now is in resorts with lots of terrain above 2200m, such as **Zermatt** (0/105cm) and **Saas-Fee** (10/135cm).

There are plenty of other options open, mostly thanks to artificial help, but there is very little off-piste to speak of and lots more snow is needed to ease any nerves before the Christmas rush.

If you are happy to stay on the pistes, other decent possibilities right now include **St Moritz**, **Davos/Klosters** and **Samnaun** (which links to Ischgl in Austria).

The forecast offers some hope of a pattern change somewhere between 17 and 21 December, but it is too early to be celebrating just yet.



More snow would be welcome in Wengen - 8 December 2016 - Photo: wengen.ch

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### Rest of Europe

All Andorran ski resorts are now up and running on a mix of natural and artificial snow. The greatest extent of skiing can be found in the **Grandvalira** area (**Soldeu, Pas de La Casa**) where settled snow depths are around 50cm up top. Several other Pyrenean resorts are also open, including France's **Cauterets** (15/45cm), but more snow would be welcome.

Elsewhere in Europe, the greatest concentration of skiing opportunities is to be found in Scandinavia. Sweden's **Åre** (48cm upper base) is in reasonable condition following 10cm of new snow on Monday. Good piste skiing can also be found in Norway, where **Geilo** has around 80cm packed down on its upper slopes.



More snow is needed at lower altitude in the Pyrenees, as can be seen in this shot of Peyragudes - 8 December 2016 - Photo: peyragudes.com

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### USA

Many western US resorts have had a top-up of new snow in the last few days and are skiing pretty well for early December. **Jackson Hole** (Wyoming) has 67/120cm of snow settled snow depending on altitude, while **Aspen** (Colorado) has 74cm mid-mountain.

For the deepest freshest powder you need to head to the Pacific north-west, where it's just starting to snow again in **Mt Baker** and the upper base is a very impressive 256cm deep.



Good early skiing in Keystone, Colorado - 8 December 2016 - Photo: keystoneresort.com

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### Canada

Early season snow conditions remain excellent in **Whistler** (155cm upper base) thanks to cold temperatures – even if there hasn't been a huge amount of new

snow over the last week. More snow is expected at all levels tomorrow and over the weekend though.

Further inland, **Sunshine Village** (106cm mid-mountain base) near Banff is also in great shape (though cold), with most lifts and runs now open.

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**Next full snow report will be on Monday 12 December 2016,  
but see [Today in the Alps](#) for regular updates**