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Latest snow report

Updated: 6pm Tuesday 27 December 2016

As we approach the New Year there is still an acute shortage of natural snow in most (but not all) parts of the Alps.

The main exception is in the south-western Alps, especially the Italian Piedmont (e.g. Prato Nevoso, Sestriere, Bardonecchia, Alagna) where snow cover is good or even very good for late December. Some parts of the Aosta valley (e.g. Cervinia, Pila) as well as the French resorts closest to the Italian border from Val d'Isère/Tignes southwards (e.g. Bonneval-sur-Arc, Val Cenis, Montgenèvre, Isola 2000) are also in excellent shape, at least above 2000m.

We should also mention the eastern Austrian Alps (east of Salzburg) where significant snow is expected in the next 24 hours. This is mostly set to benefit resorts that won't be too familiar with the majority of readers, such as Hinterstoder and Semmerling.

Elsewhere in the Alps, ski resorts are for the most part heavily reliant on snow-making. Indeed, some north-western parts of the Alps have not seen any new snow since mid-November!

As we have been at pains to point out in recent days, this doesn't mean there hasn't been some perfectly enjoyable piste skiing around - there certainly has. The problem now, however, is that the New Year crowds are beginning to descend and, with few resorts operating at anything like full capacity, this will really increase the pressure...

Austria

The best snow conditions in Austria will be in the far eastern Alps, once the weather clears up on Thursday. **Schladming** (60/100cm) is one of the most easterly resorts that most people will have heard of, where 30-40cm of new snow is expected in the next 36 hours.

Further west, it will stay mostly dry. Here **Ischgl** (0/40cm) offers an impressive 170km of pistes, despite modest snow depths. **Kitzbühel** (56cm upper base) has also done an amazing job with virtually no natural snow and has 58 pistes open.

Relative to height, the Arlberg region (including **Lech** and **St Anton**) is probably the most snowless part of Austria right now, with only 114km of its 305km of runs open, and no off-piste to speak of.



Only patchy natural snow cover on the slopes of Lech - 27 December 2016 - Photo: lech.com

France

Snow conditions remain very mixed across France. The best natural snow cover is in resorts closest to the Italian border, from **Val d'Isère/Tignes** (30/140cm) southwards, including **Val Cenis** (25/220cm), **Montgenèvre** (90/200cm) and **Isola 2000** (60/120cm).

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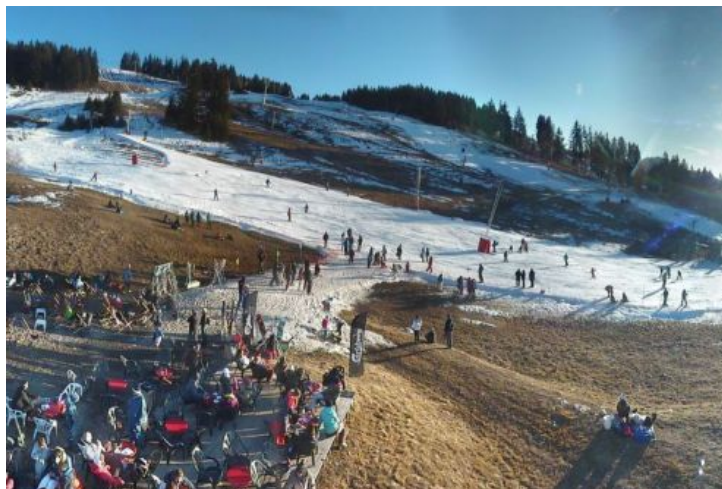
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Other resorts where there is lots of skiing above 2200m are also in reasonable shape (at least on-piste), including **Val Thorens** (60/135cm) and **Les Arcs** (10/95cm).

However, most resorts are still heavily reliant on artificial help, and those where most of the skiing is below 2200m are struggling. **Megève** (0/20cm), for example, has just 20 of over 200 possible runs open, while **La Clusaz** (0/50cm) is operating with just 16 out of its 84.



Very patchy snow cover in Manigod, near Annecy – 27 December 2016 – Photo: manigod.com

Italy

Natural snow cover in Italy remains best in the western Italian Alps, with excellent snow conditions reported in resorts such as **Sestriere** (50/140cm), **Pila** (20/200cm), the **Monte Rosa** region (5/200cm) and **Cervinia** (30/200cm).

The further east you are, the more resorts are reliant on artificial snow. **Livigno** (0/50cm) is currently offering good piste skiing, as is the **Dolomiti Superski** region (30-40cm upper base) where an incredible 976km of runs were open today, almost exclusively on man-made snow.



Good piste skiing in Madonna di Campiglio, despite very little natural snow cover – 27 December 2016 – Photo: funiviecampiglio.it

Switzerland

Snow cover is considerably below par for late December right across Switzerland, which means that most areas are heavily reliant on artificial snow.

Zermatt (0/100cm) is one of the few resorts that still has plenty of natural snow – at least high up – with 258km of its 360km of pistes currently open (if you include the links to Cervinia in Italy).

Further north, however, snow depths are much more modest. Just 75km of the 300km of pistes in the **Davos/Klosters** area (0/30cm) are currently open, while **Villars** (0/40cm) has only 11km of its 125km up and running.



The snow-park in Laax may be in good nick but, generally speaking, much more snow is needed across the area as a whole – 27 December 2016 – Photo: laax.com

Rest of Europe

In the Pyrenees, there is some reasonable piste skiing at altitude right now, but snow cover is patchy lower down and more snow would be welcome. **Soldeu** in Andorra has settled snow depths of 20/40cm depending on altitude, while Spain's **Baqueira Beret** has just 5/25cm.

Most Bulgarian ski resorts also haven't seen a big fall of snow for a while, but a moderate to heavy fall is forecast over the next day or two which will improve conditions in **Borovets** (20/90cm).

Snow conditions remain steady rather than spectacular across much of Scandinavia, with upper base depths of 45cm in Sweden's **Sälen**, and 65cm in Norway's **Geilo**.



Reasonable piste skiing at altitude in the Pyrenees. This is Cauterets – 27 December 2016 – Photo: cauterets.com

USA

At present, snow conditions are generally much better in the western US than they are in the Alps. **Jackson Hole** (130/196cm) in Wyoming is skiing as well as anywhere right now, with more snow in the forecast.

In Colorado, **Vail** (81cm mid-mountain) is also in good nick, with a little top-up expected mid-week.



Perfect pistes in Beaver Creek, Colorado – 27 December 2016 – Photo: beavercreek.com

Canada

In Canada, **Whistler's** excellent start to the season continues with 175cm of settled snow mid-mountain and a lot more to come this week.

Further east, the **Banff/Lake Louise** (56/130cm) region can also offer fabulous conditions right now, though it is cold and is set to get colder still over the coming days.

**Next full snow report will be on Thursday 29 December 2016,
but see [Today in the Alps](#) for regular updates**