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2018-19

**Latest snow report**

**Updated: 3.30pm Friday 28 December 2018**

Snow conditions in the Alps are highly variable right now - generally quite good at high altitude, but sometimes challenging lower down, especially in north-western Alps.

After a very promising build up to the Christmas period, last weekend's storm threw a major spanner in the works (at least for the northern and western Alps) bringing a significant spell of rain that fell as high as 2400m in places. The worst of this fell in the northern French and western Swiss Alps (e.g. Portes du Soleil, Grand Massif, Chamonix, Villars, Gstaad and Jungfrau region) where lower pistes suffered considerable damage.

Many other parts of Switzerland and Austria also saw some rain, but with a slightly lower rain/snow limit, especially by the end of the storm on Monday. Higher ski areas in the northern Alps (e.g. Mürren, Engelberg, St Anton, Sölden, Kaprun) therefore saw quite a bit of snow at altitude, with as much as 1m above 2400m in places.

Meanwhile, with one or two exceptions (e.g. Courmayeur), the southern Alps saw little or even no precipitation last weekend meaning that snow quality here is more consistent, even if snow depths are variable. For example, while base depths in the Dolomites are generally very modest, this area has not only avoided the rain but also has the best snow-making in Europe - the net result being that it actually has some of the best piste skiing in the Alps right now.

As for the weather, a huge area of high pressure is currently dominating the situation in the Alps. We can therefore generally expect dry and fine weather over the next few days, with lots of sunshine, at least above any fog/cloud trapped in some of the lower valleys - a common problem at this time of year.

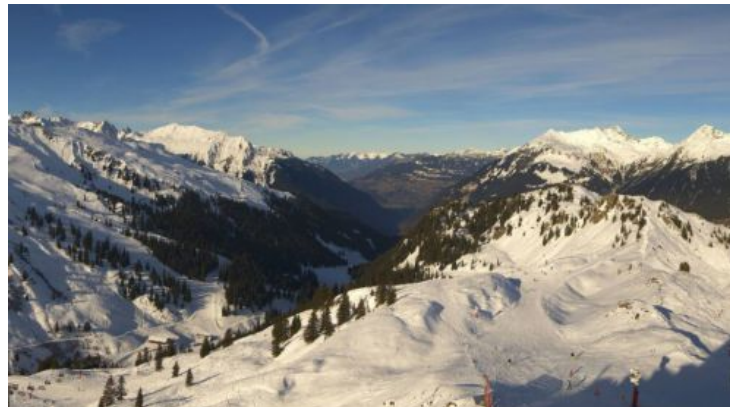
One exception this is the eastern Alps, where a few showers or flurries are likely on Sunday and Monday, notably in Austria. Generally speaking, however, we are not expecting any significant snow until well into the New Year.

Across the pond, snow conditions are generally very good both in the western US and western Canada...

**Austria**

Snow conditions are generally pretty good across the Austrian Alps, although the pistes are sometimes quite hard or icy lower down in resorts such as **Söll** (55/65cm) and **Saalbach** (15/70cm).

For the very best snow conditions, you need a ski resort with plenty of terrain above 2000m, such as **Sölden** (10/290cm) or **Ischgl** (40/120cm), both of which saw significant new snow earlier in the week.



Decent snow cover at altitude in St Gallenkirch in the Austrian Vorarlberg, but it's green lower down - 28 December 2018 - Photo: montafon.at

**Tweets** by [@weathertoski](#)



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Head to head... [#Ischgl](#) vs [#StAnton](#)  
Which has the better snow?  
[tinyurl.com/y56wuy9l](https://tinyurl.com/y56wuy9l)



37m



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[#Cervinia](#) unexpectedly closed again tomorrow following new decree. No further details at this time.  
<https://twitter.com/CerviniaValt/status/1320372177292623872>

1h

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### France

Last weekend saw lots of rain in the low resorts of the northern French Alps, such as **La Clusaz** (5/120cm) and **Morzine** (10/60cm), meaning that some pistes here are icy or worn.

For better snow quality you need to be skiing in areas with plenty of terrain above 2200m, such as **Tignes** (90/185cm) or **Val Thorens** (95/150cm), or in the far south where resorts such as **Isola 2000** (70/80cm) avoided the recent rain.



Decent snow cover in high altitude Alpe d'Huez – 28 December 2018 – Photo: alpedhuez.net

### Italy

Snow conditions in Italian ski resorts are generally more consistent than in resorts further north, as many of them avoided last weekend's rain. **Sestriere** (30/50cm), for example, is offering some decent piste skiing right now even if snow depths are modest, as is **Madonna di Campiglio** (15/70cm) further east.

For the very best snow conditions, however, the higher resorts of **Cervinia** (80/190cm) and the **Monte Rosa region** (5/170cm) are still as good as anywhere right now.

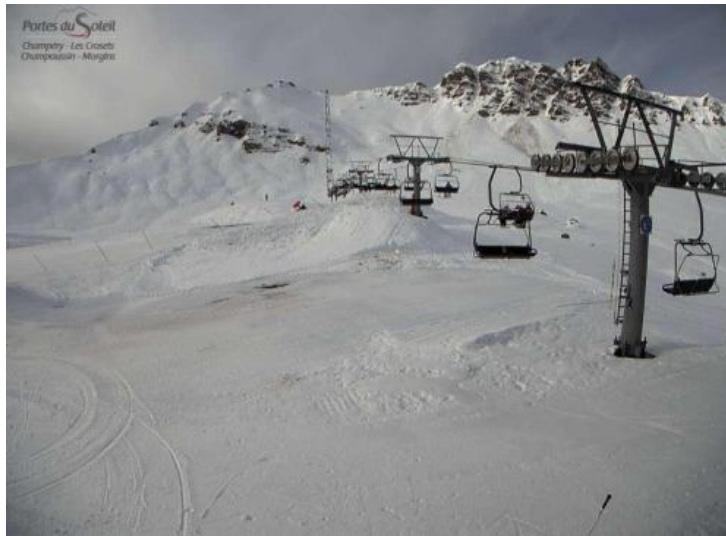


Livigno is in pretty good condition right now – 28 December 2018 – Photo: livigno.eu

### Switzerland

Snow conditions in the Swiss Alps are very mixed right now. Low resorts saw a lot of rain last weekend, which means plenty of icy/worn pistes in resorts such as **Gstaad** (5/60cm) and **Adelboden** (5/70cm) where much of the skiing is below 2200m.

Altitude is therefore the key to more consistent snow conditions, with some of the best skiing in Switzerland still to be found in **Zermatt** (10/220cm), **Saas-Fee** (25/320cm) and **St Moritz** (40/120cm).



Worn pistes in the Portes du Soleil. This is Champéry – 28 December 2018 – Photo: telechampéry.ch

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### Rest of Europe

There is currently plenty of piste skiing available at altitude in the Pyrenees, although snow conditions are generally poor with lots of hard or icy pistes.

**Soldeu** has base depths of 5/45cm depending on altitude, while **Baqueira Beret** has 25/55cm.

Snow cover is also quite modest across much of Scandinavia with just 30cm up top in Sweden's **Åre**, for example, where man-made snow is very much in the mix. Norway's **Hemsedal** is better though, with 85cm on its upper slopes and most pistes now open.

There is still insufficient snow cover for proper lift-served skiing in any of the Scottish ski resorts.



Very modest snow cover across much of the Pyrenees. This is Peyragudes – 28 December 2018 – Photo: peyragudes.com

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### USA

Snow conditions are generally very good across much of the western US. In Colorado, **Vail** (114cm upper base) has seen 8cm of new snow in the last 24 hours, with more to come this weekend before the weather settles down in the New Year.

Further north, Wyoming's **Jackson Hole** is also doing well, with fresh snow and 130cm packed down on its upper mountain.

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### Canada

**Whistler** continues to offer some excellent skiing with another 46cm of new snow in the last week and more forecast this weekend. The upper base here is now just over 2m deep.

Further inland you will also find good snow conditions in **Lake Louise** (89/120cm), with more snow also forecast here over the coming days.



Excellent snow conditions across most western Canadian resorts. This is Kicking Horse – 28 December 2018 – Photo: kickinghorsesort.com

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**Next full snow report will be on Monday 31 December 2018,  
but see [Today in the Alps](#) for regular updates**