

# High season at low(er) prices: January is the new ski-season sweet spot for great value

More British skiers are heading to the slopes in the new year – here's how best to do it and where to go, explains Abigail Butcher

January has long been one of my favourite times to ski. Good snow, quiet slopes and – despite the fact it's mid-winter – more sunshine than in the UK. It also offers some of the best prices of the winter, with everything from flights, accommodation, equipment hire and even lift passes cheaper, because (technically) it is low season.

Research and specialist tour operators have all revealed a boom in the popularity of January skiing in recent years. Ski Safari told The Telegraph that bookings for January travel were up 49 per cent from the same time last year, with Japan and Norway being the most

popular destinations this year. A study for the Ski Club of Great Britain also shows January has grown consistently more popular among British skiers in the past three years, and French research company G2A reports an uptick in overnight stays across all resorts, big and small, in January between 2019 and 2025.

“Grand Domaine resorts – the bigger ones with more than 20,000 tourist beds such as Meribel or Tignes – noted a 19.5 per cent increase and smaller ‘charme’ resorts – with fewer than 20,000 beds, such as Val Cenis or Valloire – noted a 12.5 per cent increase in overnight stays over that time,” says Alison Willis of Peak Retreats, which specialises in sending skiers to smaller destinations in France.

“Good snow, quieter slopes and cost all play a part, but we also think many skiers discovered January skiing for the first time when the French government relaxed certain Covid restrictions on Jan 14 2022. This opened up pent-up demand from those who would usually have skied in December,” she adds.

In the Trois Vallées (which includes Courchevel, Méribel and Val Thorens), occupancy in January is now up to 82 per cent according to the region's tourist office – a significant trend, when compared to February half term, where it reaches 88 per cent.

But how can British skiers make the most of skiing in January?

## Aim low

With good snowfall, January is the time to consider lower-altitude resorts, says Richard Sinclair of SNO, who reports bookings for January 2026 are up by 25 per cent, compared to pre-pandemic figures.

“The highest resorts command a premium price and can be really cold in the depths of January, so bag a bargain in a mid-altitude resort like Flaine, where prices are better but snow is likely to be great,” he says.

“January is also a great time to explore Austria, with slightly lower resorts like Mayrhofen enjoying great mid-season snow and off-peak prices.”

▼ Don't go into the red: choosing a ski holiday in January can be a cost-saving option



## Look for last-minute chalet deals

If skiers are flexible and savvy, notes Rob Dixon at Skiworld, last-minute availability can be found in chalets that are three-quarters sold.

“To secure the best offers, skiers should be open-minded about their choice of resort and chalet, and be flexible with departure dates,” he says.

## Take the train

Flight prices are undoubtedly cheaper in January, when compared with the Christmas/New Year period, and February half term, and there is often more space on the Eurostar, too.

Philip Wright, head of sales and service at Iglu Ski, says: “Saturday-to-Saturday train travel is possible this winter on the scheduled Eurostar ski train, but the capacity is not limitless, so will sell out for peak periods – choosing January to travel by train will provide better availability and the best prices.”

## Save on lift passes

Increasing numbers of resorts are offering dynamic lift pass pricing, from the Monterosa in Italy to Verbier in Switzerland.

With January classified as “low season”, ski lift passes will be cheaper – but you can also save by purchasing ahead of time, up to months in advance. As more and more ski resorts move the bulk of their lift-pass sales online, buying before you depart will almost certainly guarantee a discount on the walk-up resort price.

## Equipment discounts

Lastly, don't forget equipment hire. Chris Moran, who heads up the marketing for Intersport France, says there are big promotions to be found throughout January.

“Last January some stores offered up to 55 per cent off rental,” he said. “Discounts can be found using a simple internet search, but increase if you sign up to loyalty cards.”

## The best January ski holidays to book now

### For lift pass savings

Peak Retreats (peakretreats.co.uk) offers a buy-one-get-another-half-price lift pass throughout January in La Rosière at the new l'Ecrin Blanc apartments. Seven nights in a two-bedroom apartment costs from £566pp per week, including lift pass, based on five sharing and including a return Eurotunnel crossing

### For hotel comfort

Iglu Ski (ighuski.com) offers seven nights at L'Aigle du Montana in Tignes Le Lac, from £1,599pp, half board, including train travel and transfers, based on two sharing

### For a short break

Heidi (heidi.com) offers four nights at the four-star Good Life Hotel in Mayrhofen for £742pp, B&B, including flights and transfers

### For a dream trip

Ski Safari (skisafari.com) offers a Taste of Japan Ski & City Safari, including six nights in Niseko, three nights in Kyoto and two in Tokyo for £3,590pp, including international and domestic flights, transfers and rail passes

## About our expert

### Abigail Butcher

Qualified instructor Abigail has travelled the globe with her skis from Greenland to Siberia, Chile, Japan, South Korea and extensively across Europe