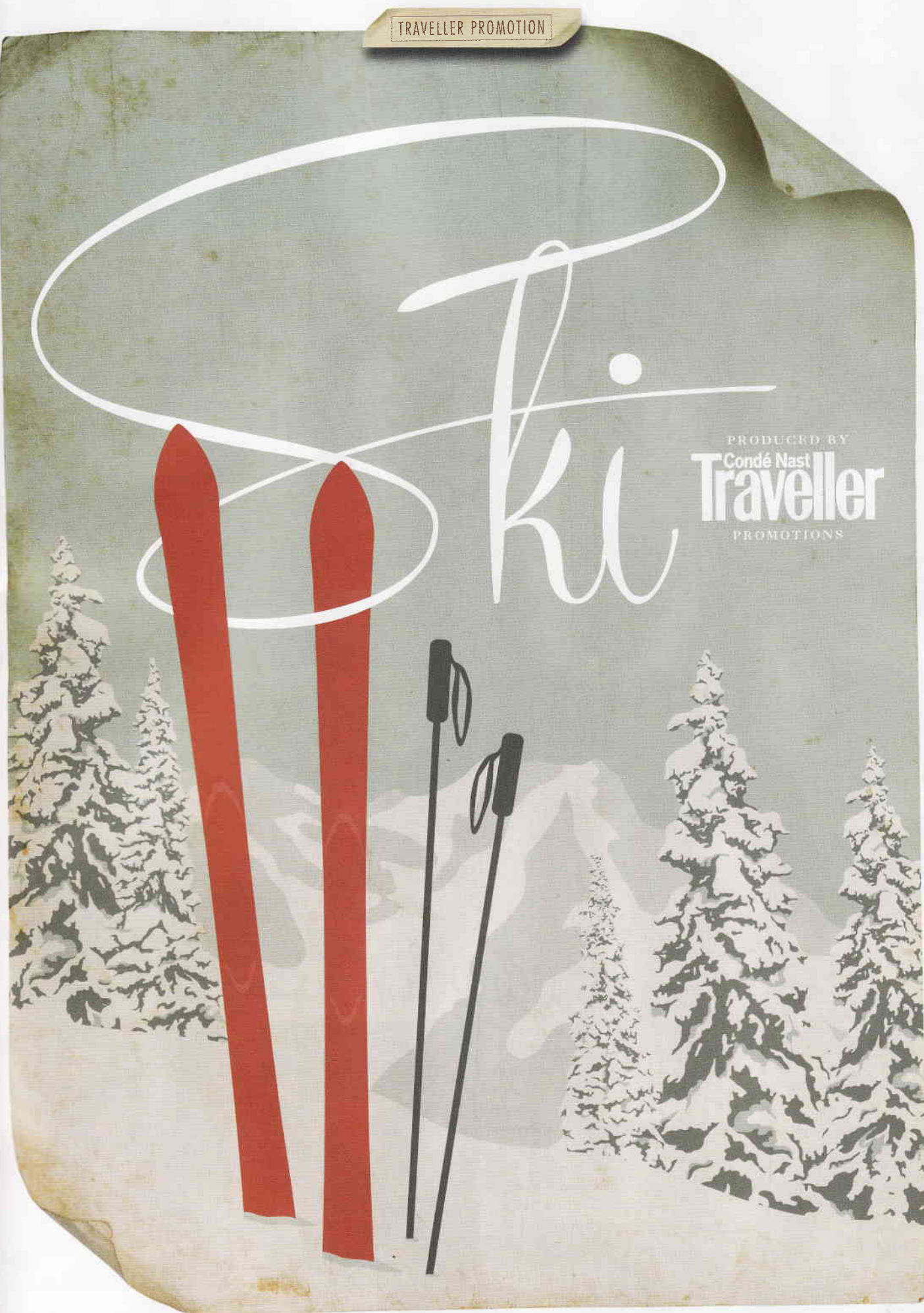


TRAVELLER PROMOTION



PRODUCED BY
Condé Nast
Traveller
PROMOTIONS



warming vin chaud as you snuggle up in a candlelit mountain hut.

The exhilaration of nailing that tricky black piste. Well-deserved cheese feasts enjoyed on sun-warmed terraces surrounded by glittering white peaks. The swell of pride as you watch your rosy-cheeked little one shred the nursery slopes. Sipping champagne in the hot tub after a day spent punishing your thighs on the slopes and après-ski bar tables. Whatever defines the joy of skiing for you, it's hard to beat sunny days spent in the crisp mountain air for an invigorating holiday.

The Alps lapped up the snowiest winter in a generation last year, sparking the first tendrils of growth in the UK ski industry in five years and making this season look extremely promising. Ski resorts across the world are fighting for your attention and have dramatically improved their slopes and lifts, launched new hotels, spas and restaurants, and created impressive wellness, sports and children's centres. There simply couldn't be a better time to spread your snowy wings.

Tour operators have also pulled their ski socks up, providing unprecedented flexibility and choice of destinations, accommodation and packages, and some sorely tempting deals. Whether you pack up the family and settle into a self-catered apartment in France, grab some mates for a rowdy weekend in Austria, cross the Pond for some North American corduroy and powder, or splurge on a romantic break in Switzerland there's an expert at the end of a telephone, poised and ready to piece together a dream trip for you. So go ahead, carpe fondue and carve out some snowy memories to treasure this winter.

Writer Gabriella Le Breton

Introduction

Condé Nast
Traveller
PROMOTIONS

Promotions Creative Director Lee Osborne
Promotions Director Victoria Higgins
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Main image: Posthaus Bar,
Café & Lounge, St Moritz,
Switzerland

Chalets

This time-honoured choice of ski holiday accommodation has hit new levels of luxury

Clockwise from top left:

Ferme de Moudon, Les Gets; Wine cellar at San Lorenzo Mountain Lodge; Helicopter at San Lorenzo; Hot tub at Trois Ours, Méribel; Bedroom at Chalet Le Ti in Verbier.



xxx

Verbier, Switzerland

If you've only got one week in the Alps, why not abandon yourself to the rustic charm and unashamed cuteness of a traditional chalet. Chalet Le Ti is true cookie-cutter perfection, hewn out of hand-cut stone and timber, warmed by open fires and scattered with sheepskin rugs, antiques and cashmere throws. Happily, the facilities (Bose iPod sound systems,

Wii console etc) are far from rustic and the staff are pros, serving lavish candlelit dinners, proffering bubbles by the pool table and chauffeuring you the short distance to the slopes and bars ckverbier.com; 0041 79 412 7398

xxx

Les Gets, France

Ferme de Moudon is the labour of love of Nicky Dobree, Alpine interior designer extraordinaire. Dobree's conversion of this 17th century farmhouse above

4.



Les Gets kick-started the trend for high-end designer chalets. Her subtle blend of old and new (exposed timber beams and vintage furnishings offset by recessed wall fires and double-height floor-to-ceiling windows) continues to set the benchmark for luxe chalets today. It's a good thing that the vast Portes du Soleil ski area is just three minutes' drive away or guests would never leave the 'farm' luxurychaletcollection.com; 01993 899 429; portesdusoleil.com

xxx

South Tyrol, Italy

Luxurious catered Italian chalets are rare but a property with the style, heritage and sheer beauty of San Lorenzo Mountain Lodge is unique. Located in rural pastures, the restored 16th-century hunting lodge affords

2.

total seclusion, uninterrupted views of the Dolomites and access to local

ski resorts by car or helicopter. Run by the fantastically hospitable Stefano and Giorgia Barbini, San Lorenzo encapsulates Italy's infectious lust for life, inimitable elegance and unpretentious cuisine sanlorenzomountainlodge.com; 0039 0474 404042; suedtirol.info

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Méribel, France

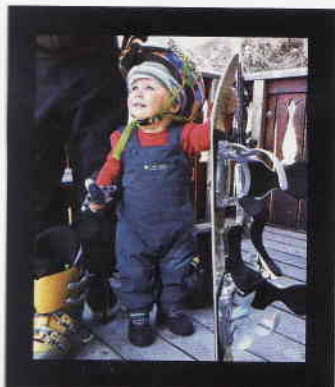
There are as many chalets in Méribel as croissants, so selecting a favourite is a tough call. However, the large ski-in/ski-out Trois Ours, gets the nod with its cinema, wraparound balcony and hot tub by a burbling river with a superb chef and champagne on tap. And yet, thanks to its quietly luxurious interiors, unpretentious staff and unassuming vibe, you feel totally at home akvillas.com; 0845 618 2205; meribel.net






Family

Resorts are more child friendly than ever, and there's always a relieving ski school at hand.



**O b e r g u r g l ,
A u s t r i a**

 he quintessentially Austrian mountain village of Obergurgl has been popular with families for 50 years, thanks to its gentle slopes, consistent snowfall, friendly ski schools and cheerful, not rowdy, après-ski scene. British family specialist Esprit Ski operates two chalets here, packaging flights, transfers and accommodation with children's ski school classes and care in a dedicated crèche

espritiski.com; 01483 791 420; obergurgl.com

*Sainte Foy,
France*

Sainte-Foy is a delicious antidote to the crowds and sheer size of neighbouring Val d'Isère and Tignes. Ideal for families, with affordable chalets, quiet pistes and excellent childcare, Sainte-Foy is also home to off-piste so good guides from Val d'Isère come here on their days off. The fantastic ski-in/ski-out Yellowstone Lodge is Sainte-Foy's most sophisticated chalet, sleeping up to 14 in contemporary and luxurious style. Get there this winter with Camel Snow, the new winter travel arm of Cornwall's watersports specialists, Camel Ski School. Used to keeping families entertained on the water through the summer months, Camel Snow brings its experience and chilled-out Rock spirit to the Alps

camelsnow.com; 0208
123 2859; saintefoy-
tarentaise.com



*Breckenridge,
Colorado*

If your little angels are turning into little rippers, take them to the old Colorado mining town of Breckenridge, which turns ski school into an adventure. The tiny ones can play at three slope-side childcare centres while their siblings join the Breckenridge Bombers, learning mountain skills or specialising in freestyle tricks, or dedicated camps like the popular 'Ski Girls Rock'. Adults have ample playtime too – with the addition of Peak 6 this winter, 'Breck' will boast five mountains and 11 bowls spread across 2,901 acres of diverse terrain, in addition to hundreds

*San Cassiano,
Italy*

Tucked in the heart of the Dolomites, with a clutch of über-luxe and Michelin-starred restaurants, it's hardly surprising that San Cassiano attracts bon viveurs like George Clooney. Leave your bombinos at the super-efficient Ski School which, like everything in the South Tyrol, blends Italian charisma with Austrian efficiency, while you enjoy scenic skiing and romantic mountain restaurants. Check into the Rosa Alpina Hotel for family-friendly suites, connecting rooms and Clooney sightings

rosalpina.it; 00 39 0471 849 500; alta-badia.org

Clockwise from this image: The Dining Hall at Yellowstone Lodge in Gardiner, Wyo.; Junior snowboarder wearing Dragon goggles in Tignes; Alto Badia in the Dolomites is a gastro haven

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Megève, France

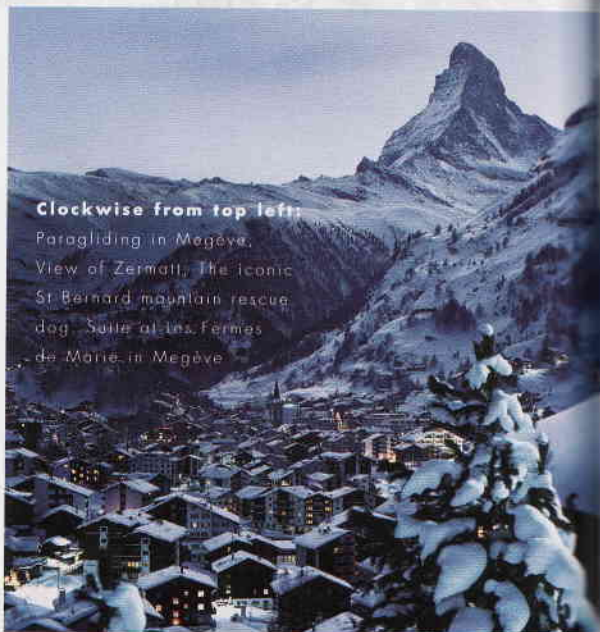
Ever since Baroness de Rothschild plucked Megève out of Savoyard obscurity in 1914 to create a winter playground for European aristocracy, the medieval town has been much more than 'just' a ski resort. Known as Paris' 21st arrondissement in its 1950/60s heyday, Megève developed a restaurant, café and shopping scene to entertain its glamorous guests. That legacy lives on, supplemented by walking paths, Nordic skiing, air ballooning and a truly exquisite hotel, Les Fermes de Marie. Housed in a cluster of chalets in a Sound of Music setting, the property boasts the Pure Altitude spa, with its exclusive Alpine-inspired products and sublime treatments fermesdemarie.com; 0033 457 747474; megeve.com



not just
Skiing

The extra activities are wild, and if it goes wrong a St Bernard will come and get you

Clockwise from top left:
Paragliding in Megève,
View of Zermatt, The iconic
St Bernard mountain rescue
dog, Suite at Les Fermes
de Marie in Megève



xxx
Zermatt, Switzerland

Zermatt was a sleepy farming community until the 1860s, when mountaineers started flocking to the lofty village under the Matterhorn. The climbers' attempts to summit the Toblerone-shaped peak drew tourists from across the world, whose appetite for Alpine drama was matched by a desire for plush hotels and gourmet dining. The Cervo Mountain Resort channels this heritage, comprising several chalets, available separately or as a whole and each featuring their own spa, with one housing a cosy bar, lounge and restaurant. Follow scenic paths to the world's finest mountain restaurants, ride the gondola up the Klein Matterhorn or soak up the views from your terrace

scottdunn.com;
020 3468 7399;
myswitzerland.com

xxx
Banff, Canada

Banff was founded as a spa town but is now famous for the Banff National Park, home to glaciers, icefields, granite peaks, turquoise lakes, three ski resorts, cycling and cross-country ski trails and a bevy of wildlife. Unlike European ski towns, winter is low season in Banff, so not only are prices lower than in summer, facilities for non-skiers compete with those provided on the slopes. There's dog-sledding, ice-climbing, ice-diving and night-time ice canyon walks as well as great shopping, museums, festivals and, of course, hot springs galore ski-i.com;

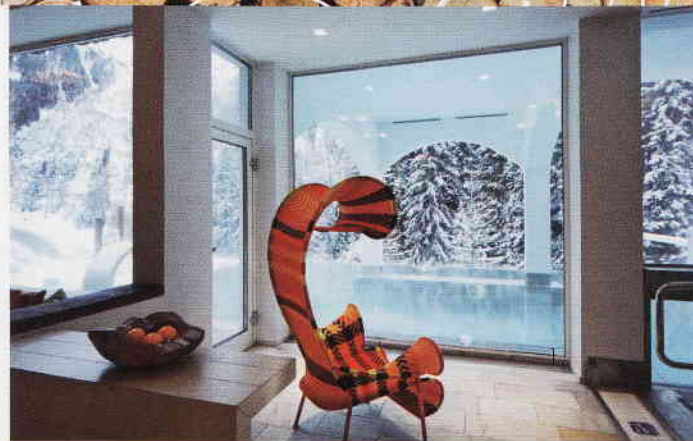
0131 516 7005;
travelalberta.com



STOP PRESS Book a seven-night break in Aspen's Molly Gibson Lodge from just £1,197 per person, including flights, transfers, b&b and daily après-ski reception, saving 30 percent when you book by December 1, 2013 with Ski Independence ski-i.com; 0131 516 7005

x X x
**Verbier,
Switzerland**

at for nothing is Verbier a favourite haunt of party-loving celebrities, who you'll find in the shabbing Casbah and Farinet bars. Alpine chic Le Rouge, minimalist Nevaï, and infamous Farm Club, still rocking after 50 years. Where to stay when you're partying like a rock star? Sir Richard Branson's pad of course. The Lodge sleeps 18 in lavish style and comes with a vast sitting room, games room,



bar, karaoke machine, indoor pool, hot tubs and 13 staff to pander to your inner diva oxfordski.com; 01993 899 420; verbier.ch

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**St Anton,
Austria**

Despite the French terminology, Austria's St Anton is the home of après-ski. Whether you're

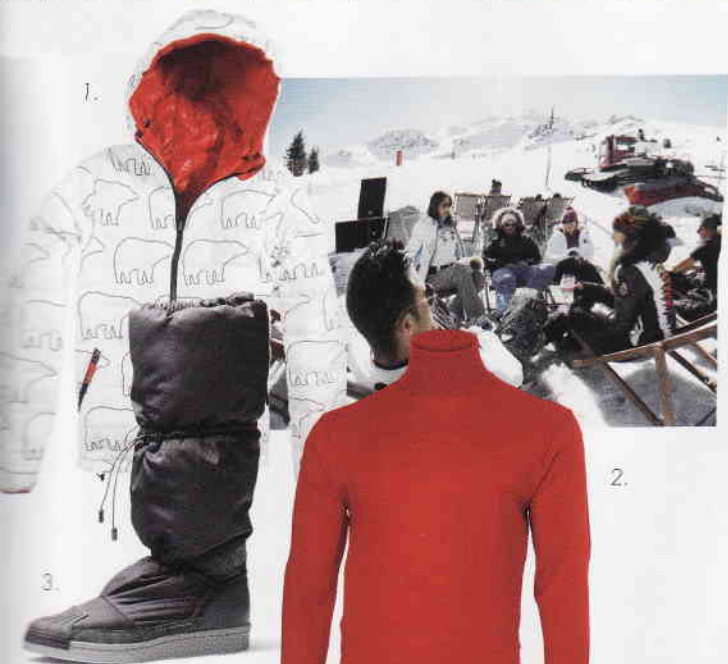
knocking back Steins in the MooserWirt, nursing a glühwein in Underground on the Piste or sipping a Grüner Veltliner in Murrel, there's a bar for you here. But St Anton has come a long way since its grungy ski bum days, evolving into a sophisticated town with chic new hotels, restaurants and bars. Stay at the heart of the après action at the classy 17-room Mooser Hotel but book early – rooms disappear quickly kalumatravel.co.uk; 01730 260 263; stantonamarlberg.com

Clockwise from this image: Fireworks in Aspen, Colorado; Mooser Hotel in St Anton; Taking a break in Courchevel, France; Chalet Edelweiss, Courchevel

Social

Explode on to the après-ski scene at one of the party capitals of the mountains

STOP PRESS Heavenly isn't just the name of this California resort, it's also the perfect way to describe the jaw-dropping views of Lake Tahoe from Heavenly Mountain Resort's slopes, and its unique après-ski: a sunset cruise on the lake followed by high-octane nightlife (snow.com).



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**Courchevel,
France**

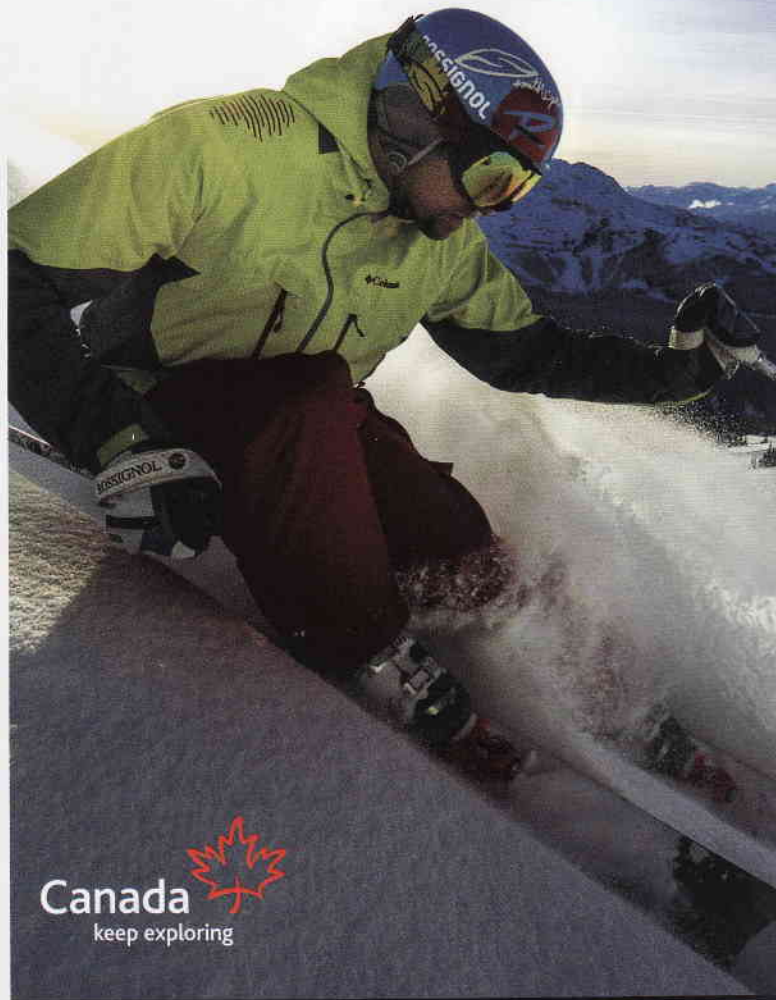
Courchevel does many things well: manicured ski slopes, glitzy boutiques, Michelin-starred restaurants, vodka and champagne-fuelled parties... And it excels at ultra-luxury chalets. However, when Chalet Edelweiss opened last winter, it surpassed even Courchevel's 'normal' levels of excess: eight suites, opulent public areas, a state-of-the-art cinema, spa and gym spread across seven floors. The icing on the cherry on the party cake? The private nightclub, with a bar and professional DJ booth and space for over 100 revellers. **summitretreats.com; 01985 850 111; courchevel.com**

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Aspen, Colorado
Aspen is something of an

anomaly in America, offering history and a party scene to rival European resorts. The pretty Victorian cottages which line Aspen's heated pavements are as likely to house a celebrity-filled Nobu or rocking cocktail bar as they are an art gallery or Chanel boutique. Drop into a pop-up Veuve Clicquot bar on Aspen Mountain, grab some truffle fries and beers on the Ajax Tavern terrace and sip cocktails in the hot tub-side 39° Bar. If you're pining for less civilised, Euro-style après ski, you can warm the rafters of Cloud Nine Alpine Bistro with a raclette and then lift them with schnapps-induced singing and dancing **ski-i.com; 0131 516 7005; aspensnowmats.com**

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Hardcore

If you're a girl (or a guy) who loves to shred powder more than lettuce, these are the pages you've been looking for...



x X x Crested Butte, Colorado

cat-skiing – backcountry skiing accessed by modified snow cats or piste bashers – is often referred to as 'poor man's heli-skiing'. However, cat-skiing from Scarp Ridge Lodge is anything but a compromise (or cheap). The 125 year-old Lodge masterfully blends Crested Butte's rustic heritage with high-tech touches, like oxygen

piped into suites overnight to combat the effects of altitude. Come morning, a modified cat complete with plasma screen and minibar picks guests up from the Lodge to whisk them to a very exclusive playground: the privately-owned Mount Irwin, with over 1,000 acres of glades, chutes and bowls smothered in virgin Colorado powder (from \$13,500/£8,700 per night exclusive use for 10 people, including cat-skiing) elevenexperience.com;

00 1 970 349 7761;
coloradoski.com

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**Chamonix,
France**

If you're a woman who's handier with a transceiver than an Aga, you'll have heard of Kit Deslauriers. The first person to have skied all Seven Summits, and the first woman and American to ski Mount Everest, Kit is every hardcore skier's idol. Thanks to upmarket Chamonix chalet operator Marmotte Mountain, Kit will be leading a week-long women's backcountry freeride camp in Chamonix this winter (6-13 April 2014). When Kit isn't shoehorning you out of your comfort zone, tackling Chamonix's infamous peaks, couloirs and powder bowls, the Marmotte Mountain team will cosset you with massages, yoga and slap-up meals (from \$3,099/£2,680

per person per week, including six days' coaching, lift pass, safety equipment and seven nights' catered accommodation) marmottemountain.com; 0033 682 891523; chamonix.com

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**Val d'Anniviers,
Switzerland**

The eye-wateringly beautiful Anniviers Valley is so lost in time, and so unknown, we seriously considered not outing the secret here. Dwarfed by five mountains over 4,000m, including the mighty Matterhorn, Anniviers encompasses 12 villages, four of which are ski hubs. Grimentz is the largest village, with centuries-old chalets, a sprinkling of restaurants and hotels and a lone nightclub. It's also home to seven chalets operated with flexible catering options by former Powder Byrne boss Will Herrington. The chalets make



Clockwise from facing page: Kit Deslauriers skiing in Chamonix; Airborne at Crested Butte, Colorado; The hot tub at Scarp Ridge Lodge, Colorado; Chalet Gentiane, Grimentz



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the perfect base from which to explore the valley's steep couloirs (used as qualifying runs for the Freeride World Tour), tree runs, powder bowls, hikeable peaks, ski-touring terrain and heli-skiing in neighbouring Italy (from £410

per person per week, on a b&b basis) rentalprestige.com; 0041 27 476 2030; myswitzerland.com

STOP PRESS Learn to ski or board for free when you book a week-long holiday with **Crystal Ski** (crystalski.co.uk; 0871 231 2256) to a choice of 11 resorts in **Europe and Canada** by 15 November 2013. Complete beginners will receive free tuition, rental equipment and lift passes.

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Image: Aspen/Gordon Branson