**Alpe d'Huez**

**Categories**

**Good For**

Beginners

Intermediates

Experts

Snowboarders

Families

Après ski

Snow reliability

**Data**

**Beginner Runs**

42

**Intermediate Runs**

76

**Advanced Runs**

17

**Total Runs**

135

**Lifts**

73

**Chairs**

23

**Drags**

35

**Gondola Cable Cars**

15

**Parks**

2

**Pipes**

0

**Weather**

**Annual Snowfall**

8.53m (28ft).

**Overview**

Alpe d'Huez is a largely purpose-built modern resort located above the old village of Huez, which has expanded beyond all recognition over the past four decades to become one of the world’s biggest ski resorts – it also has the fame of having one of the planet’s largest list-served verticals, and it sits at the top of the most famous stretch of road in the Tour de France cycle race, with its 21 hairpin bends over a 14km (9-mile) stretch.

The village itself can, in fact, be classed as separate settlements, or *quartiers*. As well as Huez village, these encompass: Les Bergers, Eclose, Cognet, Jeux, Les Outaris, Les Passeaux and Vieil Alpe. The various ski areas here drift seamlessly into one another with lifts going up in a 360-degree pattern, connected by an efficient, modern network. The 250km (157 miles) of ski runs lead up to a glacier and down to a couple of old villages, with much in between for everyone from ski-together families to experts. Its altitude tends to counter the effects of the south-facing, sunny slopes and the resort boasts around 300 days of sun a year.

**Location**

Alpe d'Huez is situated in the Grandes Rousses Mountains in the southern French Alps, high above the Oisans Valley.

**Website**

http://www.alpedhuez.com

**Piste Map**

http://www.alpedhueznet.com/gif/listings/ADH\_maps/ADH\_pistemap.pdf

**Hit The Slopes**

The main slopes in Alpe d’Huez run in a long line across the resort, with those at the bottom most suited to beginners. Go higher however, and there are far more opportunities to suit all abilities.

A prime example of this is the Sarenne run from the top of the glacier, which at 16km (10 miles) is the longest black run in the world. From here, the off-piste terrain from the glacier funnels through the legendary Tunnel on to the front face and leads to more steep powder.

Intermediates can cruise for kilometres, taking long, sweeping pistes down to the villages of Vaujany and Oz amongst others. Even the most moderate of skiers can take the gondolas that crisscross the slopes, creating a thrilling sense of achievement for first-timers. The almost self-contained Signal and Signal de l'Homme areas, on either side of the village, are good for family excursions and confident beginners.

The resort’s southerly sun-drenched slopes can cause unreliability in snow cover in early and late season, but the ski resort generally operates from early December until late April.

For further options, the lift pass also includes skiing in Les Deux Alpes and Serre Chevalier. Trips to these resorts can be arranged by tour representatives.

**Alpe d'Huez**

**Resort**

1860

**Base**

1100

**Top**

3330

**General**

**Beyond The Slopes**

Alpe d’Huez boasts a skating rink (tel: 04 7611 2116), as well as the exceptional sports centre (tel: 04 7611 2141) with indoor and outdoor pools, tennis and squash courts, a climbing wall and more.

Outdoor activities in and around the village include an ice driving school, sleigh rides, toboggan runs, snowshoe excursions and ski joring (being towed on skis behind a pony).

Something more unique to the resort is its ice caves, which can be accessed via the Grandes Rousses lift for a small fee. These mystical caves are home to new gleaming ice sculptures every year, and provide a fascinating excursion for all ages.

More daring pursuits include paragliding with an instructor or speed riding, which involves skiing with an attached ‘wing’. Both activities are available from Alpe Vol Libre (tel: 06 2266 2771; [www.alpevolibre.com](http://www.alpevolibre.com)).

**Family Fun**

A family lift pass is a great money saver and enables families to ski together, whatever their ability. For beginners, the Easy Ski school (route du Signal; tel: 04 7680 4277; [www.mgm-international.com](http://www.mgm-international.com)) provides excellent guidance for English-speaking youngsters. The alternative, The École de Ski Français (ESF) (place Paganon; tel: 04 7680 3169; [www.esf-alpedhuez.com](http://www.esf-alpedhuez.com)) is also good, but can often be crowded.

Crèche facilities are available from Les Intrépides (Avenue de Brandes; tel: 04 7611 2161), which takes children from three months to four years of age.

Off the slopes, free use of the excellent pool and skating rink for children enables endless hours of fun, while the little ones will be amazed by the twinkling ice caves with their variety of fun carvings.

**Retail Therapy**

There are hundreds of shops in Alpe d'Huez, including a wide range of ski equipment outlets, which become more attractive as the season wears on and the discounts get bigger. Apart from that, there are a couple of supermarkets and a number of delicatessens selling all manner of sausages, local cheeses, honey, wine, liqueurs and chocolates.

**Splashing Out**

Take to the air from the local aerodrome, Altiport Henri Giraud, where the Aeroclub du Dauphine flying school (tel: 04 7611 3581; [www.aeroclubdudauphine.fr](http://www.aeroclubdudauphine.fr)) gives lessons – or visitors can simply opt for an excursion (maximum three adults or two adults, two children). From the same spot, there are also helicopter flights, whether just for the ride or as transport to and from the slopes of Les Deux Alpes.

**Apres Ski**

There are plenty of bars and clubs for après-ski fun in Alpe d’Huez. The Underground Bar in Hotel Le Chamois (Chemin de la Chapelle; tel: 04 7680 3119) has a British theme, while Smithy’s Tavern (Route du Coulet; tel: 04 7611 3229; [www.smithystavern.com](http://www.smithystavern.com)) is a good place to nibble on Tex-Mex food while listening to live bands.

Other pubs have a bit more of a French flavour, such as the Freeride (Avenue des Jeux; tel: 04 7611 3420) in the resort’s centre that’s always crowded with an après-ski crowd; and the nearby Le Sporting (Avenue des Jeux; tel: 04 7680 3345).

A cluster of lively places can be found on Route du Coulet, with The Zoo (Route du Coulet; tel: 04 7680 3641) and the Eight-Bar (Route du Coulet; tel: 04 7679 8682) located next to nightclubs Les Caves (Route du Coulet; tel: 06 1127 7739) and L'Igloo (Route du Coulet; tel: 04 7680 9498).

**Eating Out**

There are a good number of decent, traditional French restaurants in Alpe d’Huez serving quality fare at reasonable prices. Among these, Au P'tit Creux (Chemin des Bergers; tel: 04 7680 6280) creates delicious local dishes with a gourmet flair. Among the establishments suitable for a cosy meal are Le Génépi (Route Romaine; tel: 04 7680 3622; [www.legenepi.fr](http://www.legenepi.fr)) and La Petite Taverne (L'Eclose; tel: 04 7680 3225; [www.lapetitetaverne-alpedhuez.com](http://www.lapetitetaverne-alpedhuez.com)). In addition, there are plenty more traditional options to try alongside pizzerias, a Tex-Mex eatery and burger joints.

**Transport**

**Getting There**

Nearest airports: Grenoble-Isère Airport (GNB); Chambéry Airport (CMF); Lyon-Saint Exupéry Airport (LYS); Geneva International Airport (GVA).

Distance to resort: 100km (63 miles); 130km (80 miles); 150km (94 miles); 220km (137 miles).

Driving time: 1 hour 30 minutes; 2 hours; 2 hours 15 minutes; 2 hours 45 minutes.

Nearest railway station: Grenoble.

Distance to resort: 65km (40 miles).

Driving time: 1 hour 15 minutes (bus service).

**Getting Around**

Free buses operate around the resort. The bucket lift transports skiers across the resort during the day, but there are also free shuttles until 2200.

**Hotels**

The sprawling village of Alpe d'Huez is a mix of buildings in all shapes and designs, with most of the new developments in a pleasant chalet style. There are more hotels in Alpe d'Huez than usual for a high-altitude French resort, while there is also an enormous choice of apartments. The Les Bergers area offers a good selection of chalets, and there are also some new chalets at the Altiport above the resort.

**Hotel Le Chamois**

This pleasant, south-facing hotel in Vieil Alpe houses a restaurant and British-themed cellar bar, and is a short walk to the lifts.

**Category**

Cheap

**Thoroughfare**

Chemin de la Chapelle

**Neighborhood**

XXX

**Locality**

Alpe d'Huez

**Sub Admin Area**

XXX

**Admin Area**

XXX

**Postcode**

XXX

**Country**

France

**Telephone**

04 7680 3119.

**Website**

http://www.holidayalps.com

**Le Chamois d'Or**

This is the standout luxury hotel in a resort where the hotels are mostly moderate. The 4-star Le Chamois d’Or is located right by the slopes and offers a pool, a Nuxe spa and great views.

**Category**

Luxury

**Thoroughfare**

Rond Point des Pistes

**Neighborhood**

XXX

**Locality**

Alpe d'Huez

**Sub Admin Area**

XXX

**Admin Area**

XXX

**Postcode**

XXX

**Country**

France

**Telephone**

04 7680 3132.

**Website**

http://www.chamoisdor-alpedhuez.com

**Le Pic Blanc**

This big and modern purpose-built slopeside hotel in Les Bergers has a large spa, fitness area and swimming pool. The on-site restaurant offers panoramic views of the surrounding slopes.

**Category**

Moderate

**Thoroughfare**

Rue du Rif Briant

**Neighborhood**

Les Bergers

**Locality**

Huez

**Sub Admin Area**

XXX

**Admin Area**

XXX

**Postcode**

XXX

**Country**

France

**Telephone**

04 7611 4242.

**Website**

http://www.hotel-picblanc-alpes.com