**Flaine**

**Categories**

**Good For**

Beginners

Intermediates

Experts

Snowboarders

Families

Snow reliability

**Data**

**Beginner Runs**

7

**Intermediate Runs**

51

**Advanced Runs**

5

**Total Runs**

63

**Lifts**

22

**Chairs**

10

**Drags**

10

**Gondola Cable Cars**

2

**Parks**

1

**Pipes**

0

**Weather**

**Annual Snowfall**

5m (16.4ft).

**Overview**

Visitors might not initially realise it but the centre of Flaine is a huge work of art designed by architect Marcel Breuer, a master of the Bauhaus style. This artistic theme goes beyond the architecture, with several large public artworks at the base of the slopes, including a Picasso.

But soon eyes are drawn away and up to the vast snowy bowl surrounding Flaine. Having taken one of the many lifts to the top, visitors are treated to stunning panoramas of Mont Blanc and views down to one of the four traditional villages that share the huge Grand Massif area with Flaine: Morillon, Les Carroz, Samoëns and Sixt.

Flaine has undergone several development projects over the years. At one time, a Scandinavian-themed village, Le Hameau de Flaine, was created a few kilometres from the main resort; while in 2008, the North American resort developer Intrawest (the company behind Whistler and a dozen other top Canadian and US resorts) moved in. It created Flaine Montsoleil, an all-new, upmarket development now run by French company Pierre & Vacances that is home to some of the newest and best accommodation at the resort. Since then, more than half a dozen new upmarket hotel and apartment complexes have been built, including two 5-star complexes.

**Location**

Flaine lies in the northern part of the French Alps, in the Haute-Savoie region of southeastern France, between Geneva and Chamonix. It is surrounded by several major ski domains: in the north by Les Portes du Soleil, in the east by Aravis, and in the south by the Mont Blanc region.

**Website**

http://www.flaine.com

**Piste Map**

http://winter.grand-massif.com/lift-map

**Hit The Slopes**

Flaine sits at the heart of the Grand Massif, one of the world's biggest ski areas, with 265km (167 miles) of trails for all standards of skier and boarder. The 140km (87 miles) of runs local to Flaine are largely located within a vast, mostly treeless snow bowl with dozens of trails leading down into it; most ultimately return to the large nursery area at the base of the slopes. The north-facing slopes here normally ensure good snow cover for much of the season.

A fast, queue-gobbling eight-seater chairlift whisks skiers and boarders over the back of the resort to some wonderfully long ski runs that lead down through the forest to the neighbouring villages, including Morillon and Samoëns. The longest of these pistes is Cascades, a famous 14km-long (9-mile) trail with spectacular panoramic views.

Most of the vast terrain is suited to intermediates; but for advanced skiers there are numerous black trails, including one of the longest in the Alps down to Samoëns. The Combe de Gers powder bowl is also popular, and off-piste courses are run by the ski schools.

The ski season in Flaine generally runs from early December until late April.

**Flaine**

**Resort**

1600

**Base**

1600

**Top**

2561

**General**

**Beyond The Slopes**

Despite being one of the livelier purpose-built ski resorts, there are relatively limited options for off-slope activities in Flaine, meaning non-skiers may want to head elsewhere.

There is, however, a small cultural centre containing unusual displays of artwork in keeping with Flaine's heritage; while other indoor facilities include a cinema and a bowling alley.

Among the outdoor options are: paragliding, snow kiting, helicopter sightseeing flights, snowshoeing, dog sledding, ice skating, ice-driving and snowmobile tours. Nearby Samoëns also offers a number of outdoor activities.

A new spa and indoor swimming pool complex opened in the heart of the resort ahead of the 2013/14 ski season at the Résidence Le Centaure complex (tel: 04 5090 8001; [www.cgh-residences.co.uk](http://www.cgh-residences.co.uk)). This large facility includes adult and children’s swimming pools, a sauna, Turkish bath, hydrotherapy tubs, and a range of beauty and massage treatments.

**Family Fun**

Almost completely car free and with a compact centre, affordable restaurants and an extensive nursery ski area, Flaine is a very good choice for families. Children from six months to three years of age can be cared for in the Petits Loups nursery (Flaine Forum; tel: 04 5090 8782), while children three and over can be looked after by either the International Ski School (ESI) (tel: 04 5090 8441; [www.esi-grandmassif.com](http://www.esi-grandmassif.com)) or the École du Ski Français (ESF) (tel: 04 5090 8100; [www.esf-flaine.fr](http://www.esf-flaine.fr)).

There's lots for children to do besides ski, including ice karting (from age six) and indoor climbing; and there's a play park with a mini toboggan hill at the base of the slopes.

**Retail Therapy**

There is an adequate selection of about 20 shops in Flaine, covering all the essentials – especially ski gear. Most of these are concentrated either in two small shopping centres or along the base of the ski runs. Make sure to browse Douce France (Flaine Forêt), which sells regional specialities, including a wide choice of wine and locally produced cheese.

**Splashing Out**

Experience the thrill of controlling a car on Flaine's 1,000m-long (3,300ft) ice circuit (tel: 04 5090 8259; [www.circuitglace.com](http://www.circuitglace.com)) in the middle of the forest. Drivers will be taught how to control the car on a circuit that recreates the difficulties encountered on a mountain road, with fast curves, bends, hairpin bends, ascents and descents.

**Apres Ski**

Flaine's après-ski scene is concentrated on half a dozen bars at the base of the slopeside apartment complexes.

One of the busiest is the English/Irish pub, Le White Pub (Flaine Forum; tel: 04 5090 8476), which serves a good range of beers and spirits, and has been under English ownership for many years. The Flying Dutchman (Flaine Forêt; tel: 04 5090 9921) is a better choice if you prefer your entertainment with a more continental European twist – there's usually a party atmosphere here enthused by a wide selection of European beers. Le Diamant Noir (Flaine Forêt ; tel : 04 5091 2243) is another popular choice with its happy hours, live music, billiards and games room.

Those seeking to party into the early hours can head to Les Caves de Flaine (Flaine Forum; tel: 04 5053 9298) nightclub, which plays the tunes until bleary-eyed revellers depart at 0500.

**Eating Out**

There are more than 20 places to eat in and around Flaine, with budget to mid-range eateries the most abundant. Among these, La Perdrix Noire (Flaine Forêt; tel: 04 5090 8181) offers house specialities composed of grilled meats, seafood, cheese and fondues.

For fantastic views of Mont Blanc either between runs or at the end of the ski day, head to the self-service Le Désert Blanc (Désert Blanc; tel: 04 5090 8209; [www.restaurant-ledesertblanc.fr](http://www.restaurant-ledesertblanc.fr)), which serves non-fussy café-style food from high up on the slopes.

**Transport**

**Getting There**

Nearest airport: Geneva International Airport (GVA).

Distance to resort: 85km (53 miles).

Driving time: 1 hour 20 minutes.

Nearest railway station: Cluses.

Distance to resort: 25km (16 miles).

Driving time: 30 minutes.

**Getting Around**

Most of Flaine is designed for pedestrian or skier access with paths, steps, ski runs and pedestrian lifts linking the different areas of the resort. Cars are banned from the village; except for loading and unloading baggage on departure/arrival (extensive car parking is provided on the outskirts). The lack of car access is negated, however, by a free shuttle bus that circulates around the few outlying areas.

**Hotels**

Accommodation in Flaine is dominated by the self-catering apartments in its original centre that are built in concrete Bauhaus-style blocks. Some prettier chalets can found in Hameau de Flaine and larger new wooden chalets are available in the Montsoleil development. There are a few catered chalets and hotels in Flaine, but the choice of hotel-style accommodation is much more limited compared to self-catered options.

**Les Terrasses d'Eos**

Flaine’s first 5-star property, the Pierre & Vacances-run Les Terrasses d’Eos offers luxury slopeside residences, apartments and a spa. True to form with the company’s usual offering, the complex boasts a wide range of leisure facilities for use by guests.

**Category**

Luxury

**Thoroughfare**

Flaine Montsoleil

**Neighborhood**

XXX

**Locality**

Flaine

**Sub Admin Area**

XXX

**Admin Area**

XXX

**Postcode**

74300

**Country**

France

**Telephone**

08 9270 2180.

**Website**

http://www.pv-holidays.com

**Ski Chalets Le Hameau de Flaine**

A rather unique proposition in the Alps, this development comprises 80 colourful and comfortable ski chalets built in a Scandinavian style.

**Category**

Moderate

**Thoroughfare**

Le Hameau de Flaine

**Neighborhood**

XXX

**Locality**

Flaine

**Sub Admin Area**

XXX

**Admin Area**

XXX

**Postcode**

XXX

**Country**

France

**Telephone**

04 5090 8909.

**Website**

http://www.flaine-reservation.com

**Villages Clubs du Soleil**

This 3-star family-oriented ski club hotel can be found in the centre of Flaine Forum, close to the ski lifts and slopes. Family suites are available, and its children's club (from three months) can keep the kids entertained while their parents enjoy the slopes.

**Category**

Cheap

**Thoroughfare**

Bât. Aujon

**Neighborhood**

Flaine Forum

**Locality**

Flaine

**Sub Admin Area**

XXX

**Admin Area**

XXX

**Postcode**

XXX

**Country**

France

**Telephone**

04 9212 6212.

**Website**

http://www.villagesclubsdusoleil.com