

If you're looking for a ski holiday that appeals to your feminine side we've got a round up of the ten best girlie getaways for the 2013 season

BY KATY DARTFORD

Here at Snow Femme we know that what some women want from a ski holiday isn't necessarily dawn to dusk, adrenaline-fuelled, piste pounding. Lot of female skiers and riders prefer a more relaxed, testosterone-free, environment where you can set your own targets and goals without the 'other half' telling you how best to get down the mountain. We also know that you might also want some time out

to enjoy a little luxury, to explore the resort, or to even indulge in a little local culture. So, we've chosen a range of girlie holidays to cater for all your feminine desires; from learning at your own pace in a friendly and supportive environment, to being coached by inspiring female skiers, or as an alternative to a girlie holiday in the sun with plenty of time to relax and enjoy a bit of pampering. Read on for Snow Femme's ten best girlie ski holidays.

10 GIRLIE GETAWAYS

BEST FOR... AN ALL-FEMALE GROUP

WHERE: ST ANTON AM ARLBERG, AUSTRIA

It's all about the girls in St. Anton am Arlberg throughout January. "Ladies First" is an annual event that this season takes place between January 5th and 26th, in the Austrian resort (stantonamarlberg.com; +43 5446 22690). The sole purpose of the female-focussed event is to pamper female skiers and snowboarders in their down-time off the slopes. Collect a 'Ladies First Book' from the tourist office, which includes vouchers and discounts to use on ski equipment, restaurants, shopping, spa treatments and relaxation classes, such as yoga and Pilates and use them at your leisure during your stay. Drinks are also free in many bars and services for women are included, such as one day's free hire of an avalanche pack when you book a ski course with the Arlberg Ski School.

HOW MUCH: Inghams (ingham.co.uk; 01483 791 111) offers seven nights', half-board at the three-star Chalet Rose, St Anton, from £539 per person, based on two sharing, departing 12 January 2013, including return flights from London Gatwick to Innsbruck and resort transfers (half-board includes skiers' breakfast, afternoon tea and cakes, four-course evening meal with complimentary wines).

BEST FOR... APRÈS-SKI AND NIGHTLIFE.

WHERE: ISCHGL, AUSTRIA

With more than twice the number of men to women visiting Ischgl, the après-ski scene is perfect for girls who want to get noticed. There's energetic off-the-snow action every day in the village that's renowned for being a party resort, as well as having some of the best skiing and snowboarding in the Alps. Ski or board over the Austrian/Swiss border into Samnaun and stock up on duty-free perfume, cosmetics, jewellery and leather goods; then head back to the village for where the pounding music and dancing will take you through from last lift to dinner time. After dark there's more partying to be had in the nightclubs of Ischgl, with many offering free entry for girls.

HOW MUCH: Ski Total's (skitotal.co.uk; 01483 791 933; skitotal) Ladies Week of Ski, Sun & Fun takes place between April 14th and 21st, 2013 and costs from £699 per person for seven nights' half-board (plus afternoon tea), in the three-star Chalet Zita based on two sharing, including return flights from London Gatwick to Innsbruck and resort transfers. Also included is a six-day lift pass, six days' equipment hire and six days guiding with a ski host.

MORE INFO: Contact Ski Total quoting Snow Magazine and Ladies Week.



ST ANTON

BEST FOR... COUPLES, WITH GIRLIE BENEFITS

WHERE: LE GRAND BORNAND, FRANCE.

Sometimes it just pays to be a woman and in the pretty resort of Le Grand Bornand, one of the four Lake Annecy Ski Resorts, that's certainly the case. The resort is offering free ski lessons for women from January 19th to 26th when your partner books six and a half days of ski school with the French ESF ski school. Le Grand Bornand is perfect for beginners and ladies hoping to make the jump from greens to blues. And what's more, it's only a short hour-long hop from Geneva Airport, making it a great place to maximise your time on the slopes.

HOW MUCH: Le Grand Bornand (legrandbornand.com; +33 (0) 4 50 02 78 06) is offering seven nights' self-catering accommodation from 624 euros per person, including two lift passes. There are only 20 places available, however, on a first-come-first-served basis.

GETTING THERE: EasyJet (0843 104 5000, easyjet.com) flies to Geneva from £34 per person one-way.

BEST FOR... MIXED-ABILITY GIRLIE GROUPS

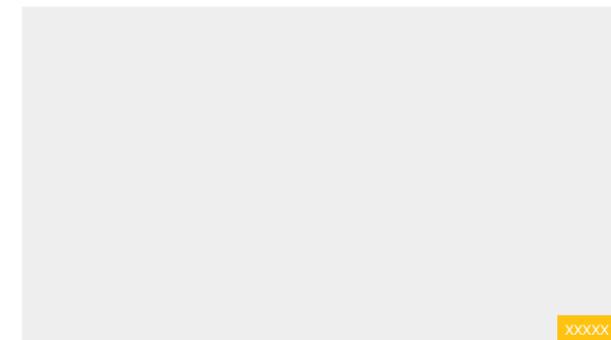
WHERE: VERBIER, FRANCE

If you want to go with your girlfriends, but you all ski to different levels, then Diva Ski (divaski.com; +44 (0) 20 8748 6995) offers a series of 'girls only' ski programmes that are designed to take your skiing to a new level but also to, "escape, have fun and be pampered". The gals at Diva Ski offer three levels of tuition: Diva Elements for beginners, Diva Experience for intermediate and advanced, and Diva Extreme for advanced skiers only. All the courses take place in Verbier, Switzerland, where there's terrific shopping and a vibrant nightlife to complement the awesome skiing. Diva Ski recognises that girls are different to men; our bodies are different, the way we ski is different, that our equipment requirements are different and that our attitude is different. The courses aim to give ladies the confidence to ski out of their comfort zone and to encourage putting your self first, rather than your partner or kids.

HOW MUCH: A four-night Diva Experience intermediate course, or a four-night Diva Extreme advanced course featuring three mornings of ski tuition, with a maximum of four girls in a group, and three afternoons ski guiding costs from £600 per person. Accommodation is excluded.



LE GRAND BORNAND



BEST FOR...LADIES MAKING THEIR FIRST TRACKS

WHERE: CHÂTEL IN FRANCE

If you're new to skiing then join a Ski Goddess courses in Châtel, a small resort five minutes from the Swiss border, which is part of the huge Portes du Soleil linked ski area. Here you can join a small group or get a group of friends together for some skiing and tuition whatever your level. Ski Goddess course are taught in a way that recognises that women often learn differently to men. But Katie Dobson, the company's founder, believes that both men and women can reach the same level of skiing in the same amount of time, as long as the approach to learning is appropriate. With this in mind Dobson tailors lessons, sessions, workshops and courses to suit the way you, as a woman and also as an individual, learn best.

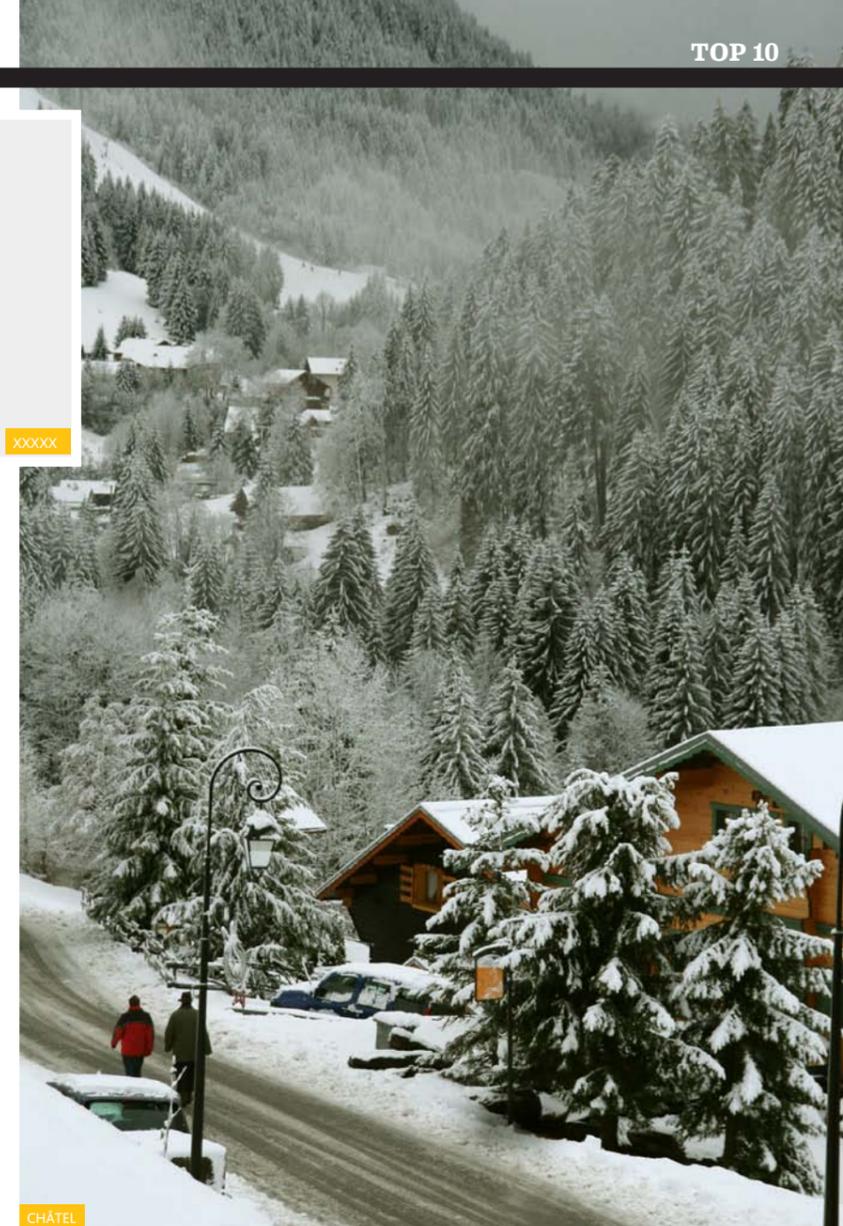
HOW MUCH: Ski Goddess (skigoddess.co.uk; 07900 926 548; 0033 (6)20 692 297) offers a four-day intermediate course departing on January 9th on a Bed & Breakfast basis from £1100 per person including transfers from Geneva airport but excluding flights. Ski Goddess runs six course a year between January and March.

BEST FOR.... ADVENTUROUS GIRLIES

WHERE: LA GRAVE, FRANCE

If you are serious about your skiing, and you're feeling flush, then try Jessica Baker's Ski Diva's 'Ultimate Steep Skiing and Skill Building Camp,' in La Grave. This course will teach you how to tackle some of the steepest and most challenging ski terrain in Europe. Areas covered include steep skiing skills, alpine safety, glacial travel/ skiing, avalanche awareness and rope and anchor skills. Instructor Jessica Baker was 2004 US Freeskiing Nationals Champion. The course has a maximum of five guests per coach which means that you get heaps of individual attention. Off the slopes you can do yoga every morning, there's discounted massage therapy, French language lessons, wine and cheese workshops and even a camp finale party!

HOW MUCH: The six-night Ultimate Steep Skiing and Skill Building Camp (skidivas.com; 001 307 690 3683 US number) costs from US\$3,800 (approx £2,340) per person staying in t the three-star Hotel Edelweiss, on a half-board basis, including transfers from Grenoble, lift pass, coaching, video analysis and après ski activities. Monarch (monarch.co.uk; 08719 40 50 40) flies to Grenoble from London Gatwick from £37 per person one-way and from Manchester from £34 one-way.



CHÂTEL

BEST FOR...FUN OFF THE SLOPES

WHERE: COURCHEVEL, FRANCE

Art and chocolate, it could be the perfect combination for off slope entertainment. This winter, the statue, Mademoiselle Courchevel, made by French artist, David Cintract, will be launched in the resort as the emblem of the 2013 winter season and there will be plenty of events based around her. For skiing, Ski Sublime offers 'Women's Weeks' with a female teacher and only female students, then after burning off all those calories on the slopes, its surely time for some alternative après ski? Piste Noire, the artisan chocolate factory based in Courchevel is launching two new products this winter and will organise tastings where they will demonstrate the fine art of chocolate making.

HOW MUCH: Ski Sublime (skisublime.com; +44 (0) 131 208 2910) offers a five-day women's programme, featuring six hour's tuition each day, for €200 per person (valid for any week outside of the peak season). Evasion Travel (evasiontravel.co.uk; 0208 1334533) offers seven nights half-board in Chalet Grand Pige, Courchevel Le Praz, from £335 per person, excluding flights and transfers

BEST FOR... GIRLIE SNOWBOARDERS

WHERE: WHISTLER, CANADA

This winter the Canadian resort of Whistler is offering woman a chance to improve their snowboarding skills on a two-day Roxy All Star camp. The camps are run by top pros and members of the Canadian National Snowboard team and welcome all levels of snowboarders. If you're keen to explore the vast terrain of the Whistler and Blackcomb mountains, the location for the last Winter Olympics, and you fancy improving your boarding technique in a fun and relaxed environment then this is the course for you.

HOW MUCH: A two-day camp including lift pass costs from \$377 CAN per person (camps run on select dates throughout February, March and April). Inghams (inghams.co.uk; 01483 791 111) offers seven nights at the four-star Delta Whistler Village Suites from £1030 per person, on a self-catering basis, including return flights from Heathrow to Vancouver and resort transfers.

BEST FOR... ROMANCE

WHERE: CORTINA D'AMPEZZO, ITALY

The majestic and spectacular Dolomites, with their pink and orange hues, provide the perfect backdrop for romance. And there's no better place to get cosy with your beau than in the chic town of Cortina d'Ampezzo, known as the Queen of the Dolomites. The Italian resort has designer shops, cute cafes, gourmet dining, sophisticated bars and luxury hotels. What's more, the snow-covered slopes which rise above Cortina, offer extensive skiing and boarding. For the ultimate in romantic meeting places there's an outdoor hot tub at the 2,255m-high Rifugio Scoiattoli next to the Cinque Torri chair lift, where you can drink champagne and watch the sun set on the majestic peaks.

HOW MUCH: Ski Solutions (skisolutions.com; 020 7471 7786) offers seven nights, bed & breakfast, at the Hotel Panda, Cortina, for £749 per person departing on December 5th, 2012, including return flights from London Gatwick to Venice and transfers.

