**Serre Chevalier**

**Categories**

**Good For**

Beginners

Intermediates

Experts

Snowboarders

Families

Non-skiers

Snow reliability

**Data**

**Beginner Runs**

52

**Intermediate Runs**

35

**Advanced Runs**

13

**Total Runs**

100

**Lifts**

61

**Chairs**

20

**Drags**

28

**Gondola Cable Cars**

6

**Parks**

5

**Pipes**

1

**Weather**

**Annual Snowfall**

6m (20ft).

**Overview**

Of all the large ski areas in the French Alps, Serre Chevalier is the most southerly. It is a friendly, good value resort and offers a fine range of pistes to suit most skiers and boarders.

A strong point here is the tree cover (a rarity in the French Alps) which ensures potentially good skiing, even in poor weather. Its open slopes and bowls are great fun during the resort's more common sunny periods.

Serre Chevalier likes to be referred to as Serre Chevalier Vallée to highlight the fact that it is made up of multiple villages along a mountain valley. Some resort bases are more significant than others, with the old walled town of Briançon, together with the villages of Chantemerle, Villeneuve and Le Monêtier, providing the lion's share of resort facilities.

The mix of rustic and modern ambience in the various villages is somewhat offset by heavy traffic along what is the main Grenoble-Briançon road. But, despite this, the centre of Serre Chevalier ski resort exudes charm, with its family-run hotels and cobbled streets lined with bars and restaurants.

Overall, Serre Chevalier has a reputation as a laid back destination with a good mix of terrain.

**Location**

Serre Chevalier is located close to the Italian border in the glaciated upper Durance Valley of the Southern French Alps. The resort lies on the boundary of the Parc des Écrins, which is within the Écrins Massif – the highest mountain range entirely within France.

**Website**

www.serre-chevalier.com

**Piste Map**

www.serre-chevalier.com/wp-content/uploads/2011/07/Plan-Pistes-14.15.jpg

**Hit The Slopes**

The variety of slopes above the four main villages of Briançon, Chantemerle, Villeneuve and Le Monêtier is excellent, especially for intermediates who can enjoy a vast array of red and blue runs.

The snow conditions here are generally reliable, since most slopes face north or northeast. The ski season in Serre Chevalier runs from December until April.

Beginners are well catered for too with good nursery slopes at Le Monêtier and some fun greens above Villeneuve. Of the various, well-regarded ski schools in Serre Chevalier, New Generation (tel: +33 4 7901 0318; [www.skinewgen.com/ski-schools/serre-chevalier](http://www.skinewgen.com/ski-schools/serre-chevalier) ) in Le Monêtier has some of the best reports with maximum group sizes of six.

Experts can find consistently good snow conditions at higher elevations and plenty of steep blacks and fun off-piste action, especially above Le Monêtier and Villeneuve.

Snowboarders and freestylers are certainly not neglected, and will enjoy Serre Chevalier’s five terrain parks, including the Video Zone at Villeneuve. Here, it’s possible for boarders to view their tricks and runs afterwards and even share their achievements with friends.

The lift system, which has often been criticised for its abundance of old lifts at altitude, is improving all the time, but it can still often become very busy (especially at higher levels) and queues are a problem during holiday periods.

**Serre Chevalier**

**Resort**

1200

**Base**

1200

**Top**

2735

**General**

**Beyond The Slopes**

Among the winter sports activities on offer in Serre Chevalier is ice skating on rinks in Le Monêtier and in Chantemerle, plus ice driving, snowshoeing, skijoring and sleigh rides in and around the resort. There is also a casino, indoor golf, snowkiting and Nordic walking.

For those seeking repose, there's a large thermal bath complex, Les Grands Bains (tel: +33 4 9240 0000; [www.lesgrandsbains.fr](http://www.lesgrandsbains.fr)), in Le Monêtier. It has an outdoor pool equipped with jet fountains, chutes, relaxation zones and a hot tub. A smaller swimming pool and spa complex can also be found in Villeneuve.

Come evening, visitors of all ages can unwind at the various cinemas in the main villages or try their luck at the Bowling Des Neiges bowling alley (tel: +33 4 9243 1002) in the Serre d'Aigle shopping centre.

**Family Fun**

Serre Chevalier is popular with French families, so expect very busy slopes during the school holidays. There is a reason why local families choose Serre Chevalier: each village has a range of facilities and activities for children, which have helped it win the Family Plus accolade from the French government.

One of the best childcare options is Les Schtroumpfs (tel: +33 4 9224 7095; www.garderie-villeneuve.com) in Villeneuve, which caters for children from nine months old to six years.

Among the organised events for children is the Festival for Young People, which takes place in December. During this four-day event, the resort puts on a range of workshops, shows and games for children to enjoy.

**Retail Therapy**

Options are limited for shopaholics, with little more than skiwear retailers and rather predictable souvenir shops in Serre Chevalier to explore. However, the 17th-century upper quarter of Briançon is worth a visit even if just to window shop. One of the more unique gift shops is Penelope Creates (tel: +33 4 9224 1790; [www.penelope-creations.com](http://www.penelope-creations.com)) in Chantemerle, which sells painted wooden plaques and t-shirts.

**Splashing Out**

The Circuit de Glace (tel: +33 4 9224 7844; [www.circuitserrechevalier.com](http://www.circuitserrechevalier.com)) in Villeneuve offers ice-driving lessons, which are not only fun, but can come in useful when driving on icy roads back home. Options range from 20-minute spins to whole courses.

**Apres Ski**

The main villages that make up the ski resort are not especially lively. However there are some bars worth visiting for some animated après-ski in Serre Chevalier.

Among the best options are popular wine bar 1420 (tel: +33 4 9255 4110; www.1420serrechevalier.com); Auberge Mont Prorel (tel: +33 4 9220 2288; [www.hotelmontprorel.com](http://www.hotelmontprorel.com)) at the gondola base in Briançon; bar, restaurant and regular live music Le Triptyque (tel: +33 4 9224 1494), a bar, restaurant and regular live music venue opposite the church in Chantemerle; and the friendly Bar L'Alpen (tel: +33 4 9224 4349) in Le Monêtier.

**Eating Out**

**Serre Chevalier** has a moderate range of restaurants; the majority are family-run and serve French mountain dishes or traditional local recipes.

Le Loup Blanc (tel: +33 4 9224 1427; www.restaurantleloupblanc.com) is one of the best with everything from great steaks and fondues to raclette and foie gras.

In Briançon, Le Passé Simple (tel: +33 4 9221 3743;) specialises in mountain dishes and 17th-century cuisine.

In Chantemerle, Le Petit Chalet (tel: +33 4 9224 0579) also serves superb Alpine dishes, while in Le Bez, Le Bidule (tel: +33 4 9224 7780) comes highly recommended.

If you’re in a rush, Le Royal (www.atributeto.fr/leroyal) serves up fast food.

**Transport**

**Getting There**

Nearest airports: Turin International Airport (TRN); Grenoble-Isère Airport (GNB); Chambéry Airport (CMF).

Distances to resort: 135km (83 miles); 160km (100 miles); 180km (111 miles).

Driving times: 2 hours: 2 hours 40 minutes; 2 hours 50 minutes.

**Getting Around**

Serre Chevalier ski resort is situated over the Col du Lauteret pass, on the busy main road between Grenoble and Briançon. A ski bus operates until 2300, after which there is no public transport. Shuttle buses also operate around the various villages.

**Hotels**

Serre Chevalier provides good value lodgings with its atmospheric hotels and traditional chalets. The majority of accommodation in Serre Chevalier is in the form of moderately priced and family-run hotels, which have a great ambience. But there are also a few catered and self-catered chalets, ranging from budget to luxury, in and around the various villages.

**Hotel Plein Sud**

This popular 3-star hotel is all about good service and decent food. Rooms are reasonably sized and spotless, and there are mountain views and south-facing balconies available, plus a pool area.

**Category**

Moderate

**Thoroughfare**

Allée des Boutiques

**Neighborhood**

XXX

**Locality**

Briançon

**Sub Admin Area**

XXX

**Admin Area**

XXX

**Postcode**

05240

**Country**

France

**Telephone**

+33 4 9224 1701.

**Website**

www.hotelpleinsud.com

**Le Grand Aigle Hotel**

This wonderful hotel combines the traditional with the contemporary to great effect. Located in the hamlet of Le Bez, just 100m (328ft) from the slopes, the 4-star retreat also has fantastic spa and a highly regarded restaurant.

**Category**

Luxury

**Thoroughfare**

8 Chemin du Cavaillou

**Neighborhood**

XXX

**Locality**

Briançon

**Sub Admin Area**

XXX

**Admin Area**

XXX

**Postcode**

05240

**Country**

France

**Telephone**

+33 4 9240 0090.

**Website**

www.hotelgrandaigle.com

**Hotel La Boule de Neige**

This friendly hotel in the charming Chantemerle village is only 300m (984ft) from the Luc Alphand slope. It has a lovely traditional restaurant and pleasant, homely rooms.

**Category**

Cheap

**Thoroughfare**

15 Rue du Centre

**Neighborhood**

XXX

**Locality**

Serre Chevalier

**Sub Admin Area**

XXX

**Admin Area**

XXX

**Postcode**

05240

**Country**

France

**Telephone**

+33 4 9224 0016.

**Website**

www.hotel-labouledeneige.com

**Hotel Alliey**

This well-designed and child-friendly hotel has two swimming pools, a restaurant and a spa. Accommodation is spread over two traditional houses and is rated either 2- or 3-stars.

**Category**

Moderate

**Thoroughfare**

Le Monêtier les Bains

**Neighborhood**

XXX

**Locality**

Serre Chevalier

**Sub Admin Area**

XXX

**Admin Area**

XXX

**Postcode**

05240

**Country**

France

**Telephone**

+33 4 9224 4002.

**Website**

www.alliey.com

**Hotel Edelweiss**

An elegant 2-star hotel in the centre of Briançon, Hotel Edelweiss provides basic family-friendly accommodation with a small dining area used for hearty evening meals.

**Category**

Cheap

**Thoroughfare**

32 Avenue de la République

**Neighborhood**

XXX

**Locality**

Briançon

**Sub Admin Area**

XXX

**Admin Area**

XXX

**Postcode**

05240

**Country**

France

**Telephone**

+33 4 9221 0294.

**Website**

www.hotel-edelweiss-briancon.fr

**Chez Bear**

Serre Chevalier’s most luxurious chalet, this restored 17th-century farmhouse is located in the hamlet of Belvoir, just outside Briançon. Guests here are treated to a champagne welcome reception, gourmet dinners and a complimentary chauffeur service.

**Category**

Luxury

**Thoroughfare**

62 Chemin de Belvoir

**Neighborhood**

XXX

**Locality**

Briançon

**Sub Admin Area**

XXX

**Admin Area**

XXX

**Postcode**

05240

**Country**

France

**Telephone**

+33 6 1438 4794.

**Website**

www.chezbear.com