**Serre Chevalier**

**Categories**

**Good For**

Beginners

Intermediates

Experts

Snowboarders

Families

Non-skiers

Snow reliability

**Data**

**Beginner Runs**

58

**Intermediate Runs**

42

**Advanced Runs**

15

**Total Runs**

115

**Lifts**

62

**Chairs**

21

**Drags**

32

**Gondola Cable Cars**

9

**Parks**

5

**Pipes**

1

**Weather**

**Annual Snowfall**

6m (20ft).

**Overview**

Serre Chevalier ski resort is a friendly, good-value resort with a fine range of pistes to suit most skiers and boarders. A strong point is the tree cover – a rarity in the French Alps – which ensures potentially good skiing even in poor weather, while the open slopes and bowls are great fun during the resort's more common sunny periods.

Serre Chevalier now 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. One of these villages, Briançon, is the highest town in France.

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.

**Location**

Serre Chevalier ski resort 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**

http://www.serre-chevalier.com

**Piste Map**

http://plandespistes.serre-chevalier.com/?keepThis=true&TB\_iframe=true&h...

**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; and the ski season in Serre Chevalier runs from December until April.

Beginners are well catered for here, with especially good nursery slopes at Le Monêtier and some fun greens above Villeneuve. Of the various well-regarded ski schools in Serre Chevalier, Eurekaski (tel: 04 9224 5647; [www.eurekaski.com](http://www.eurekaski.com/)) 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 is ice skating on rinks in Le Monêtier and in Chantemerle, or ice driving, snowshoeing, skijoring and sleigh rides in and around the resort.

For those seeking repose, there's a large thermal bath complex, Les Grands Bains (tel: 04 9240 0000; [www.lesgrandsbains.fr](http://www.lesgrandsbains.fr/)) in Le Monêtier, with its outdoor pool equipped with jet fountains, chutes, relaxation zones and a hot tub. A smaller swimming pool and spa complex can 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 alley (tel: 04 9243 1002) in the Serre d'Aigle shopping centre.

**Family Fun**

Serre Chevalier ski resort is popular with French families, so expect very busy slopes during the school holidays. There is a reason local families choose Serre Chevalier; each village has a range of facilities and activities for children, which has contributed to it receiving the Family Plus accolade from French tourism and government organisations.

One of the best childcare options is Les Schtroumpfs (tel: 04 9224 7095; [garderie-villeneuve.com](http://garderie-villeneuve.com)) in Villeneuve, which caters for children from nine months old to six years.

Among the activities and organised events is the Festival for Young People, which is now in its 18th year. 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 (17 Route des Carines; tel: 04 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 (22 Route de Grenoble; tel: 04 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 options are the popular Auberge Mont Prorel (5 Avenue Réné-Froger; tel: 04 9220 2288; [www.hotelmontprorel.com](http://www.hotelmontprorel.com)) at the gondola base in Briançon; Le Triptyque (19 Rue Centre; tel: 04 9224 1494), a bar/restaurant and regular live music venue opposite the church in Chantemerle; and the friendly Bar L'Alpen (Rue des Glaciers; tel: 04 9224 4349) in Le Monêtier.

**Eating Out**

Try something traditional in Briançon at Le Passé Simple (1 Chemin L'Envers; tel: 04 9221 3743; [www.auberge-de-la-paix.com](http://www.auberge-de-la-paix.com)), which specialises in mountain dishes and 17th-century cuisine. In Chantemerle, Le Petit Chalet (Route Grenoble; tel: 04 9224 0579) also serves superb Alpine dishes. While in Le Bez, Le Bidule (tel: 04 9224 7780) is widely recommended by both visitors and locals alike.

**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 ski resort 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 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-star.

**Category**

Moderate

**Thoroughfare**

Le Monêtier les Bains

**Neighborhood**

XXX

**Locality**

Serre Chevalier

**Sub Admin Area**

XXX

**Admin Area**

XXX

**Postcode**

XXX

**Country**

France

**Telephone**

04 9224 4002.

**Website**

http://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**

XXX

**Country**

France

**Telephone**

04 9221 0294.

**Website**

http://www.hotel-edelweiss-briancon.fr

**Chez Bear**

The resort'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**

XXX

**Country**

France

**Telephone**

06 1438 4794.

**Website**

http://www.chezbear.com