Breathe in

and FEEL REBORN HERE
THE WORLD’S LARGEST SKI AREA

Auvergne-Rhône-Alpes is home to no fewer than 173 ski resorts, and its mountains are its most popular destination, alone accounting for 7.4% of France’s mountain-derived economy. With 39.7 million skiing days paid for during the winter of 2017/2018, Auvergne-Rhône-Alpes very much positions itself at the top of the list of European skiing regions, ahead of the Tyrol and countries such as Italy, Japan and Switzerland. This brought in more than a billion euros from ski lift passes, which is 79% of France’s total (source: Domaines Skiables de France). This top position has been achieved, among other things, by interconnected ski areas, open to all abilities, together with reasonable prices and an ongoing investment policy. But innovation also occurs in the mountains, which evolve to the requirements of the people who come here, be they skiers or non-skiers, for snowshoeing, walking, tobogganing, or use of recreational areas; all sorts of pastimes for a variety of enjoyment.

Targeting more distant markets

Auvergne-Rhône-Alpes Tourisme is pursuing its ambitions worldwide, backed by Atout France and in conjunction with la Compagnie des Alpes, the world’s leading operator of ski areas, which brings together France’s top 12 resorts under the French Alps umbrella, and which enjoys a high profile in emerging and distant markets including China, Russia, the US, Canada, the Middle East, Japan, India and Brazil.

THE MOUNTAINS OF AUVERGNE-RHÔNE-ALPES

In both summer and winter, the mountain villages and resorts have a wide variety of activities on offer, from the gentle slopes of the volcanoes of Auvergne and of the mountains of Jura, Vercors, Pilat and the Ardèche, to the peaks of the northern Alps, with Mont Blanc towering above. Skiing and Nordic activities in winter, hiking and climbing or relaxing and ruminating, provide stays with all sorts of benefits, chief among which are revitalisation and well-being.
WINTER SPORTS
IN AUVERGNE-RHÔNE-ALPES

THE NORTHERN ALPS

The northern Alps comprise the world’s largest ski area, and are seen as the ultimate benchmark with regard to winter sports, as attested to by the Winter Olympics that have been held three times here, in Chamonix (1924), Grenoble (1968) and Albertville (1992).

For all styles, preferences and methods, the resorts of the Alps are the perfect place to head for whether you prefer your slopes gentle or you’re after an adrenaline rush. Some 160 resorts mean everyone can find the perfect winter sports destination. The interconnected ski areas, a French speciality that can be enjoyed without moderation, provide increasingly varied skiing options.

With a single ski pass, you can access hundreds of kilometres of pistes and discover diverse locations without having to go to the same place twice. This is certainly the case for les Trois Vallées, the world’s largest skiing area, with 600 km of pistes open to skiers of all abilities, as well as les Portes du Soleil, Paradiski, and l’Espace Killy.

Village resorts including Chamonix, Megève, le Grand-Bornand and la Clusaz are a draw for those looking for a bit of authenticity and some protected areas of countryside. And when it comes to lively and hip resorts, then Courchevel, Val Thorens, Tignes, La Plagne, Val d’Isère, Les Arcs, Alpe d’Huez and les Deux Alpes form a wonderful combination of adrenaline, partying and wide-open spaces.

On the snow-covered flanks of the Alpine massifs, mountains now come à la carte! Skiing’s days of dominance are over, and every winter, new sports and pastimes are being enjoyed, including airboarding, snowscooting, snowshoeing and dog sledding, plus water-based activities, fine food and wellness, which these days form a happy part of people’s time here during winter.

www.savoie-mont-blanc.com
www.isere-tourisme.com

A new Club Med resort

Club Med already has a presence in 17 Alpine resorts, and is opening a new one every year. Samoens Grand Massif having opened last year, this year was the turn of Les Arcs Panorama. And they share a single ambition: to act as an irresistible draw for mountain enthusiasts in both summer and winter.

Le Folie Douce is opening at Chamonix Mont-Blanc.

Welcome to the first of the Folie Douce Hotels: a location that’s open to the open-minded! www.lafoliedouchehotels.com

SKIING THE VOLCANOES

Auvergne, with its five mountain ranges and its three winter sports resorts (Le Lioran, Le Mont-Dore and Super-Besse) together with a large Nordic skiing area, is the perfect place for a family holiday. Reaching a height of 1886 metres, Le Sancy is home to around 100 km of downhill skiing.

www.sancy.com

Its protected areas make Auvergne a total paradise for cross-country skiers and snowshoers, with more than 950 km of safe routes on the Aubrac Plateau, the slopes of Le Sancy and the Monts du Forez. The recently refurbished Cap Guéry mountain centre provides a range of Nordic activities.

www.capguery.com

THE MOUNTAINS OF JURA

A COUNTRYSIDE BREAK IN SUMMER OR WINTER

With its lakes, waterfalls, rivers, forests, hills and grassland, the mountains of Jura are home to a wide range of landscapes. This is the perfect place to head for recharging your batteries in the midst of this protected countryside. With cross-country skiing, skating, snowshoeing and other options, in the mountains of Jura you can choose between major routes with amazing views over the mountains of Jura. The Nordic trails take you to the heart of the snow-covered landscapes as you tackle the Grand Nord. Fancy trying your hand at biathlon? Take part in a cross-country skiing race! Gain some real altitude at the family resort of Mont Jura! Come and enjoy some downhill and cross-country skiing, take advantage of the recreational areas and pick a snowball fight! www.montagnes-du-jura.fr

Le Printemps du ski (Springtime skiing): there’s skiing, of course, but that’s not all!

From 20th March 2019 you can take advantage of the Springtime skiing offers. Whether you’re a seasoned skier or a beginner, spring is a time of year when the most fun is to be had on the pistes. With pleasant temperatures, plenty of sunshine and lots of snow, you’re set for a really amazing stay! Enjoy all sorts of skiing in the morning (downhill, Nordic, freeride, freestyle and touring), and then try some new activities in the afternoon (mushing, zipwire, biathlon, sledding or spa).

www.leprintempsduski.com
Le Rocky Pop at les Houches
looking out towards Mont-Blanc is a place with an illuminated frontage you just can’t miss. Some of its inhabitants will be lounging around on the stylish sofas, others will be battling it out with the table football while peace reigns in the relaxing Banquise area, where you can read your emails or get stuck into a nice book.
www.rockypop-chamonix.com

Le 1861 Châtel Hostel in Châtel
From the outside, it looks like a huge, timber chalet. A pretty standard youth hostel. Until, that is, you’re hit by a riot of colours. The whole place has been refurbished to give it energy. The kitchen is lemon yellow, the rooms electric blue or fuschia pink and the bar a striking red.
www.1861chatelhostel.com

Le Moontain Hostel in Oz-en-Oisans
In the middle of the huge Alpe d’Huez skiing area, this brings together travellers driven by the desire for new experiences, action and the great outdoors. There’s a studio feel to the rooms that can house from 2 to 20 people, featuring plywood and large stencilled numbers. The dormitories allow for privacy, while the industrial lockers make storing personal items easy.
www.moontain-hostel.com

HO36, l’hostel des 3 Vallées
This concept is already a roaring success in Lyon. Last year, the latest incarnation arrived in Les Menuires, right in the heart of les Trois Vallées. And it doesn’t depart from the house style, with urban decor, a snug atmosphere and low prices.
www.ho36hostels.com/en/les-menuires-3-vallees

THE MOUNTAIN GENERATION

Alpe d’Huez - Tomorrowland
9th to 16th March 2019
The Electronic Music festival. This will be the first time that the festival called Tomorrow Land Winter will be taking place in France during the winter, in Alpe d’Huez. 30,000 people are expected for this inaugural mountain event.
www.tomorrowland.com/fr/winter/bienvenue

Val d’Isère - 39th édition la Scara Race
2nd to 5th April 2019
Since it was set up in 1981, la Scara has hosted participants who went on to compete in the world championships in later years. This international race draws the best young skiers aged 12 to 15. Over 4 days, more than 1500 competitors from 32 countries will be battling it out on the famous OK piste for this Junior World Championship race.
www.valdisere.com/agenda/la-scara

Live in Tignes By Francofolies
16th to 19th April 2019
Tignes to host this 4th festival in 2019. On the menu: 3 days of free concerts on the pistes and right in the resort, featuring the best of the current crop of artists. Sunshine, soft spring snow beneath your skies and three days of music in the amazing setting of the mountains of Tignes.
www.tignes.net/live-in-tignes-by-francofolies-2018

Les Deux Alpes - Rise Festival
15th to 21st December 2019
A week of snow and music in the Alps. A mega programme and lots more! An adventure for the senses.
risefestival.co.uk

GÉNÉRATION MONTAGNE
Auvergne-Rhône-Alpes

DRAWING YOUNGER PEOPLE
The mountains are not just a wonderful playground, they’re also a place of contentedness, for sledging, for meeting up with others and for exchanging. In both summer and winter, resorts are falling over themselves to provide packages that are suited to younger visitors: facilitating access to resorts (carshare, shuttles), organising new activities, festive events and new types of accommodation, plus all sorts of sports activities and preferential rates.

HOSTELS: A LOOK AT THE GROWING TRENDS
Hostels that are hip, online and community-focused are arriving at resorts. Rejuvenating the image of youth hostels, they are breaking the mold with their urban whimsy, cool vibe and low prices. Unusual, tasty food prepared before your eyes. A harmony of mismatched sofas. Yoga lessons before breakfast. Veggie, gluten-free and often organic food. Codes and styles that attract a young and connected clientele who are often on tight budgets.

Two new openings in December 2018
- In les Deux Alpes, France Hostel will be opening The People Hostel, an establishment with 364 beds
www.les2alpesreservation.com/the-people-hostel.html
- In La Plagne, this winter HO36 will be opening its second high-altitude establishment.
www.ho36hostels.com/en/les-menuires-3-vallees
PROTECTED NATURE PARKS

PROTECTED NATURE

Protecting the natural environment and biodiversity of the region’s mountains is a priority illustrated by the number of nature parks in Auvergne-Rhône-Alpes: 2 national and 10 regional parks throughout the region which ensure the protection of these mid- and high-mountain landscapes.

www.parcs-naturels-regionaux.fr/les-parcs-en-action/tourisme

The regional nature parks provide locations for leisure-based and outdoor sports-based tourism.

The parks have opted for ecotourism in which development is combined with protecting and exploring nature. This type of tourism, which is usually conducted in small groups or individually, focuses on observation, interpretation, and education, and on the study of natural environments. It does not simply involve exploring landscapes and seeing their flora and fauna. Ecotourism is intended to raise awareness of the need to protect the environment, not only among visitors to the region, but also among the people who live there. It is with this in mind that the parks have been involved in putting together packages with real meaning, based on finding out about a region, its past, its culture and its inhabitants, together with passing on strong values based on heritage, environmental responsibility, openness and sharing.

Parc Naturel Régional du Vercors
A bastion of limestone. A familiar and perhaps over-used expression, but one which accurately reflects reality here.

Parc Naturel Régional des Baronnies provençales
Straddling the Auvergne-Rhône-Alpes and Provence-Alpes-Côte-d’Azur regions, the Parc Naturel Régional des Baronnies Provençales spans a massif between the Drôme and Hautes-Alpes departments.

Parc Naturel Régional des Monts d’Ardèche
With an area of around 200,000 hectares, the Monts d’Ardèche comprises an area of extraordinary heritage. Allow some time to stop, listen and watch, and you’ll discover some of the cultural and natural highlights of the undiscovered region of Ardèche.

Parc Naturel Régional de la Chartreuse
The Chartreuse massif has a strong identity of its own, with all the features you’d expect for having been awarded regional nature park status in 1995.

Parc Naturel Régional des Volcans d’Auvergne
Welcome to Europe’s largest regional nature park, stretching over 390,000 hectares and through both Puy-de-Dôme and Cantal. Mainly volcanic, it comprises five mountainous regions, each highly individual in nature.

Parc Naturel Régional du Pilat
Le Pilat is a land of contrasts, with spectacular panoramas culminating in the 1,432 metre summit of the Crêt de la Perdrix, a place which enjoys both a Mediterranean and alpine climate.

Parc Naturel Régional du Massif des Bauges
Come and explore the Massif des Bauges, its landscapes, its local produce and its local crafts. Learn about the work being undertaken here on a daily basis in all sorts of different areas.

Parc Naturel Régional Livradois-Forez
Spread over more than 320,000 hectares of the Puy-de-Dôme and Haute-Loire departments, the Livradois-Forez is one of France’s largest regional nature parks, with a wide variety of natural habitats that are home to all sorts of plants and animals.

Parc Naturel Régional du Haut-Jura
The Parc Naturel Régional du Haut-Jura is a place of natural beauty, well-being and savoir-faire. A mountainous region of contrasts, with a huge range of different environments.

Parc Naturel Régional de l’Aubrac
The Aubrac was given regional nature park status on 23rd May 2018. Positioned to the south of the Massif Central, it incorporates 64 communes, straddling the regions of Auvergne-Rhône-Alpes and Occitanie, and the departments of Aveyron, Cantal and la Lozère. The shepherds’ huts known as burons are reminders of its agricultural activities and serve to reinforce the Aubrac’s entrenched cultural and rural identity. These served as seasonal dwellings used traditionally for milking and for cheese manufacture.

Parc National de la Vanoise
The Parc National de la Vanoise was established in 1963 in response to the demise of the indigenous ibex population, and is France’s oldest national park.

Parc National des Écrins
Set up in 1973, the Parc National des Écrins is one of France’s 10 national parks. Its protected central area can only be reached on foot.