



FTSE 100 ▲ 7266.67 +0.53% <small>(HTTPS://WWW.TELEGRAPH.CO.UK/MARKETS-HUB/INDEX/X1)</small>	FTSE 250 ▲ 19557.04 +0.34% <small>(HTTPS://WWW.TELEGRAPH.CO.UK/MARKETS-HUB/INDEX/X12)</small>	GBP/USD ▼ \$1.3263 -0.27% <small>(HTTPS://WWW.TELEGRAPH.CO.UK/MARKETS-HUB/CURRENCY/Y15)</small>
GBP/EUR ▼ €1.1695 -0.42% <small>(HTTPS://WWW.TELEGRAPH.CO.UK/MARKETS-HUB/CURRENCY/Y9)</small>	BRENT OIL ▲ \$67.24 +0.33% <small>(HTTPS://WWW.TELEGRAPH.CO.UK/MARKETS-HUB/COMMODITY/C7)</small>	BITCOIN ▲ \$3986.51 +0.08% <small>(HTTPS://WWW.TELEGRAPH.CO.UK/MARKETS-HUB/CURRENCY/Y31)</small>

[More share information on MARKETS HUB](https://www.telegraph.co.uk/markets-hub/) (<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/markets-hub/>)

PREMIUM

Home > Money > Property > Abroad

Where to buy a ski home in the Alps that will help pay for itself



An apartment in Val Thorens, €1.48m with Leggett

Follow

By **Liz Rowlinson**

17 MARCH 2019 12:00PM

Home

My Feed

Saved

While there have been some phenomenal dumps of snow this season, ski resorts continue to adapt themselves for snow-free weeks, and towards being prepared for all seasons (<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/property/abroad/ski-winter-swim-summer-live-europes-loveliest-lakes/>).

The number of ski visitors across the globe increased in 2017 for the first time in four years, according to the 2018 International Report on Snow & Mountain Tourism. It's a trend that plays into ski property buyers' increased appetite for rental returns.

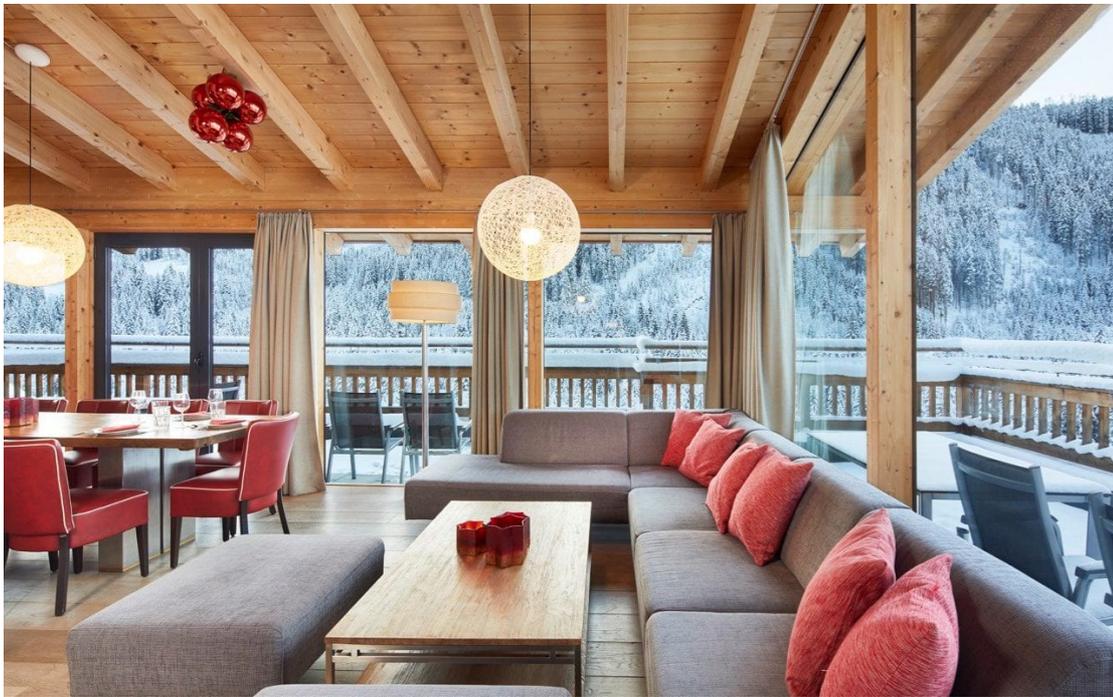
A survey by agent Savills and the holiday rentals portal HomeAway last year found that, while 54 per cent of ski property owners had intended to rent out their homes when they first bought them, 79 per cent of owners currently do. This figure is even higher in Austria, where most second homes must be rented out.

“Ninety per cent of our buyers in Austria are interested in rental income,” says Giles Gale of agent Alpine Property Finders. “The Brexit-induced fall of sterling means that buyers are borrowing as much as they can to mitigate the currency drop. [L] [SEP] Consequently, rental income becomes very important as a means to finance their loans.”

— ADVERTISEMENT —



So which resorts are best for good rental returns, and what kind of property makes the best investment (<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/property/abroad/buy-ski-chalet-half-price-access-slopes/>)?



A penthouse in Gerlos, €1.19million with Alpine Property Finders CREDIT: MICHAEL HUBER HALLENBADSTÄÄYE

France is Britons' favourite place to ski and attracts the second-highest number of skiers in the world (after the US). For French Alps estate agency Second Home, rentability is a prime search criterion for choosing location.

“High-altitude, ski-in, ski-out properties are prime investor requests (<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/property/abroad/goat-herders-humble-ski-chalet-became-millionaires-must-have/>), so resorts like Val Thorens [the highest resort in the Three Valleys], Reberty 2000 [a small resort next door in Les Menuires], Arc 1950 and Alpe d’Huez are popular,” says Kristell Thornton, the agency’s director. “Investors used to primarily look at leaseback developments, but now the flexibility and ease provided by websites like Airbnb and HomeAway means that they consider the same [freehold] type of properties as holiday-home hunters who want to rent to cover their ownership costs.

“The guaranteed return of leaseback schemes [where the owners lease their property back to the developer] is no longer the incentive it once was. Owners do not like the inflexibility of being tied up for years to come [lease contracts are typically nine to 11 years],” she says. A recent survey by Ipsos MORI on ski tourism reported that 45 per cent of French skiers visited the Alps last summer, so clearly there is a year-round market to be tapped into.

Telegraph Property

The best of our property content - from luxury homes, interiors and heritage to news and analysis of the UK housing market

Dave Chesterton, 42, a building surveyor from north London, chose to buy three neighbouring studio apartments in Val Thorens and manage them himself. The apartments cost €78,000 (£67,000) in 2016, but are now worth €120,000 after refurbishment and capital appreciation.

“I’m playing the long game so, with the prospect of global warming, I chose a high resort, which always has snow, even when [nearby] Meribel loses it,” he says.

“I could hand over the apartments to a lettings agent for the season and receive a “fixed fee” of €6,000 per apartment, or a turnover of €30,000 to €40,000 per season managing them myself. That’s with around 50 per cent occupancy based on long weekends between mid-November until early May.” The apartments rent for €90-150 per night (valthorenski.com).

A Meribel flat, €4.583m with Athena Advisers

“It works well for us, as we also want some usage ourselves. We now have a three-year-old, and it’s a very family-friendly resort. We are going to use it during the Tour de France, which passes through this year.”

Tamsin Beube of Leggett Immobilier confirms that apartments in Val Thorens “sell like hot cakes”. “We have studio apartments from €210,000, or one-bedders in a four-star residence from €535,000.”

Val d’Isère is another high-altitude resort, where the “snow guarantee” means it is the

[\(https://www.telegraph.co.uk/property/abroad/buy-val-disere-snowiest-spot-alps/\)](https://www.telegraph.co.uk/property/abroad/buy-val-disere-snowiest-spot-alps/), loved for both its challenging pistes and après ski, is undergoing major investment. “Its ski season is more than 20 weeks every year and you can charge some of the highest rates per week in a ski resort,” he says.

“A good four-bedroom apartment on the slopes will rent for up to €20,000 per week during peak times, with typically 80 per cent winter occupancy, 30 per cent in summer.” On a new property for sale at €3.2 million, he estimates an income of around €82,000 (net of agency fees/service charges), based on 75 per cent winter occupancy.

Properties at Stallion Lodge, in Megève, can produce net yields of 4.9 per cent. This apartment is €1.95 million with Erna Low Property

“If you rent it out, you can get 20 per cent VAT back [off that figure] within two months of its completion. That can cover mortgage repayments.” He adds that 90 per cent of their buyers want to rent, and three or four-bedroom apartments provide better yields than chalets.

“You can offset service charges and mortgage interest to reduce your tax liability in France,” he says, adding that Meribel, with similar yields and lower new-build prices, is also a good choice for generating income.

You don't have to pay big prices in big-name resorts for the numbers to stack up,

he says. This masterplanned, car-free resort is in the Paradiski ski area. “A two-bedroom apartment costing €300,000 will rent easily for at least 12 weeks in winter, and four in summer. This achieves around €17,760 net after cleaning costs and service charges are deducted.”

Becca Worsley and her family, from Wiltshire, bought a two-bedroom apartment in Arc 1950 for €350,000 in 2014 that rents well (lesarcs2bedapartment.com). “We switched from renting it out via a management company to doing it ourselves,” she says. “We can earn more income, and have the benefits of not being tied into redecorating bills for decor we wouldn’t have chosen – and flexibility to take last-minute trips ourselves if the apartment has not been filled.”

Becca Worsley, with her daughter and friends at Arc 1950

Marchant’s other top three choices are Combloux and Megève, in the Evasion Mont-Blanc ski area, and Les Gets in Les Portes du Soleil. “Combloux is high enough to catch the snow, but not so high that you’ll get snowed in,” he says. “It is a stunning valley popular in both summer and winter, with chic Megève on the doorstep. A new two-bedroom apartment costs €360,000 to buy, and renting it for 15 weeks a year will produce rental income of €25,000, a net yield of 4.68 per cent.”

Meanwhile, Les Gets, like its neighbour Morzine, has a great summer season, with mountain biking now a big draw. A two-bedroom apartment at the new development Residence Stella produces rental income of €30,000, a net yield of 3.5 per cent.

Giles Gale puts his money on Austria over Switzerland, where only 30 per cent of buyers are interested in rental returns (and purchase prices are generally much higher). “It is virtually impossible to find a holiday home in Austria that does not need to be rented out. Most buyers invest in a new-build managed scheme,” he says.

This four-bedroom apartment in Val d'Isère, €3.16million with Athena Advisors, is projected to earn €81,884 per season.

“A good example is the Glemm Residence in Saalbach-Hinterglemm [in Salzburg province] with a full array of steam rooms and saunas that will help drive demand outside the winter season.” Prices start from €229,800 with Alpine Property Finders.

But his top choice of resort is Zell am See – a location that is due to be lift-linked to Saalbach-Hinterglemm this year – for its dual-seasonality. “You can rent out your home for around 25 weeks per year, due to the summer lake-based activities and cultural

events,” adds Gale. A new two-bedroom apartment, with projected net yields of 4.5 per cent, costs €450,000.

He also flags up a scheme in the resort of Gerlos on the Tyrol/Salzburg border that produces net yields of 5 per cent. “High occupancy is driven by strong Dutch demand. Large apartments that cater to big groups are often the most important feature when considering which property to book.”

Contact us

[About us \(https://corporate.telegraph.co.uk/\)](https://corporate.telegraph.co.uk/)

Rewards

[Archive \(https://www.telegraph.co.uk/archive/\)](https://www.telegraph.co.uk/archive/)

[Reader Prints \(http://telegraph.newsprints.co.uk/\)](http://telegraph.newsprints.co.uk/)

Branded Content

Syndication

Guidelines

Privacy

Terms and Conditions

[Advertising terms \(http://spark.telegraph.co.uk/toolkit/advertising/terms-and-conditions/\)](http://spark.telegraph.co.uk/toolkit/advertising/terms-and-conditions/)

[Fantasy Sport \(https://fantasyfootball.telegraph.co.uk/\)](https://fantasyfootball.telegraph.co.uk/)

[Voucher Codes \(https://www.telegraph.co.uk/vouchercodes\)](https://www.telegraph.co.uk/vouchercodes)

Modern Slavery

© Telegraph Media Group Limited 2019