



# 5 reasons to love Val d'Isère

Get ready. The home of skiers, snowboarders, hedonists and families alike is finally dusted with snow and ready for a season of spectacular events

by Rowena Carr-Allinson

Once dubbed 'Val de Sloane Square' the resort is a favourite with the British, but still keeps heaps of authentic charm, gastronomic treats, beautiful spas and top-notch accommodation.

## 1. The Snow & The Slopes



In Val d'Isère you'll always find snow, even if it's the fake stuff, thanks to the largest artificial snowmaking operation in Europe, also known as 'Le Snow Factory'. More good news is that the lift queues are rare, even in high season, thanks to its eight main mountain access lifts and 300km of pistes. And, to top it all off, one-to-one lessons are available in English with BASS (British Alpine Ski & Snowboard School) with great instructors like the lovely Craig. The latest development is an "easy-ski" zone at the top of Solaise, ideal for teaching kids and beginners. [www.valdisere.com/ski](http://www.valdisere.com/ski)

## 2. The Gourmet Food



To spoil yourself, head to [l'Atelier d'Edmond](#) where chef Benoit Vidal boasts 2 Michelin stars in a cosy farmhouse chalet with ambience. He also offers an affordable menu at the downstairs brasserie with delicious hearty yet sophisticated dishes. For a traditional Savoyard cheese-fest try the trendy new Fondue Factory, which is also home to an impressive collection of skis belonging to the Killy family. At lunchtime, try [La Fruitière](#), at the top of the La Daille or the cool new [Crazy Barmes](#) in town where Michelin-starred chef Alain Lamaison and his team offers quick quiches and amazing pastries including the best raspberry cheesecake in the Alps.

## 3. The Cosy Ski Chalets



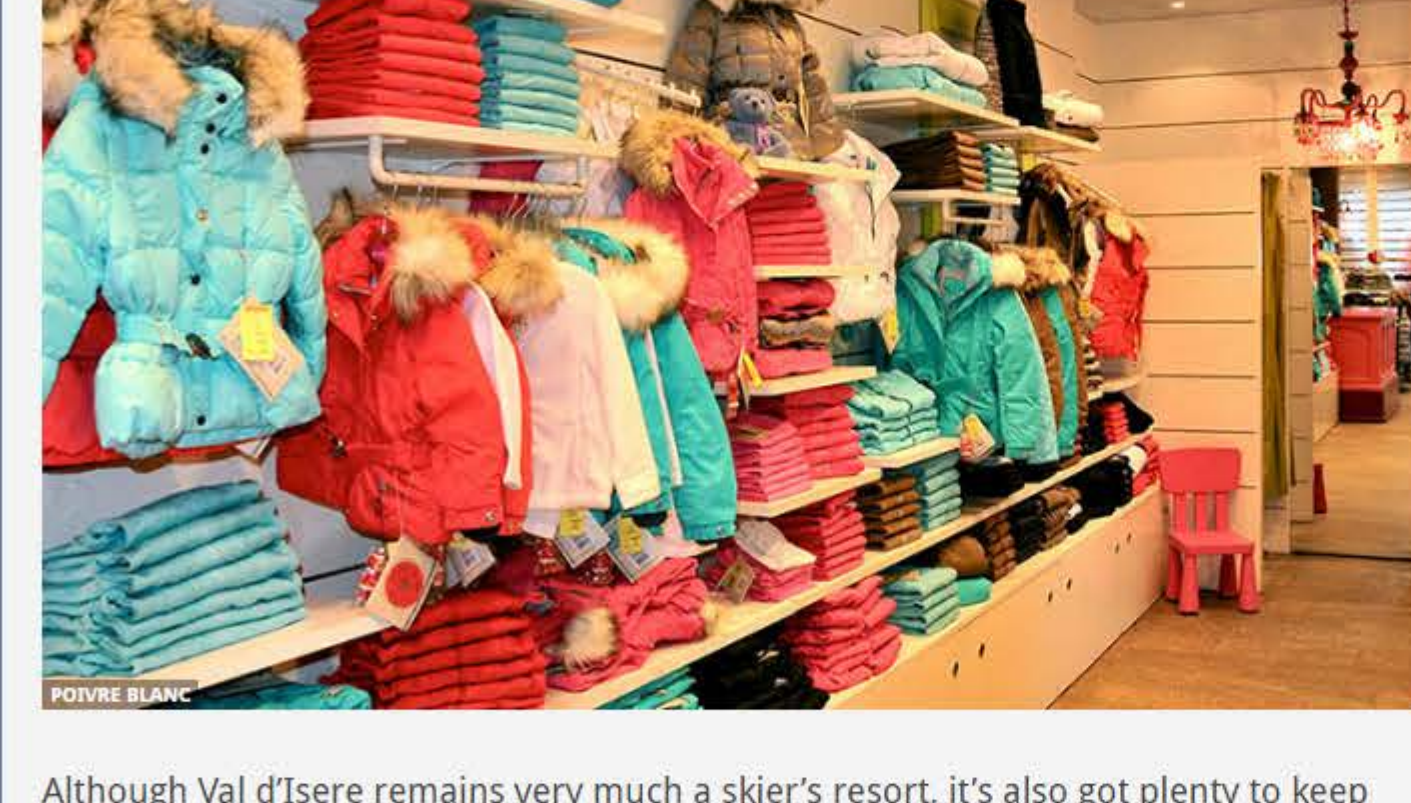
Catered chalets are the way to go for those who want to be spoiled with great service, good food and a very friendly vibe. Centrally located, a few minutes from the slopes, VIP Ski's Aspen Lodge is the perfect hideaway, combining a chic chalet décor with plenty of much appreciated extras from Sky TV to boot warmers, Jacuzzi baths, a hot tub, nanny services for the kids and a steady stream of freshly homemade baked cakes, no to mention a "ski valet" who will meet you at the slopes with your skis. Pure luxury - the only way to stay! [www.vip-chalets.com](http://www.vip-chalets.com)

## 4. The Pampering



Head to Nuxe spa at the five-star, new hotel [Le Yule](#) and make the most of the swimming-pool, saunas, steam room and in house hairdresser, or try the smart 1,000 square meter Swiss Valmont spa at [Les Barmes de l'Ours](#), another must in town. [Le Blizzard Hotel](#) is also well know for its Clarins Spa while the [Institute Carita](#) is perfect for a quick manicure fix. Don't want to leave the chalet? [Pamper off Piste](#) will come to yours and tend to your every need in the comfort of your home. Book the lovely Kate for a pedi or, for aching muscles after an intense skiing session, one can also enjoy the services of their osteopath.

## 5. The Non-Ski Stuff



Although Val d'Isère remains very much a skier's resort, it's also got plenty to keep those who don't want to hit the slopes busy. Whether you want to shop at [Poivre Blanc](#) for funky sports gear or [Berenice](#) for chic French fashion, indulge in pastries at the boulangerie or go sporty, there is plenty to do. [The Aqua Sports](#) centre offers a huge and even a soft play area for the kids, while there's also an ice skating rink in the village and for a different type of gliding, husky dog sledging trips or 4x4 ice driving lessons... In fact, if you need inspiration, download the free Val d'Isère app which is packed with suggestions and practical tips including pistes maps and every useful number you can imagine.

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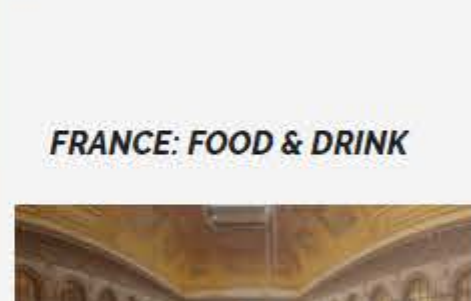
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