



The skier's choice, year after year.

Every year, we welcome back thousands of skiers who've discovered that a Mark Warner holiday is the best you can get. Take our choice of resorts. We only go to the top ones - Val d'Isere, Meribel, Verbier, Zermatt, Courmayeur, Selva, Kitzbuhel and St. Anton. Since our first season 14 years ago, we've always put quality of skiing at the head of our priorities. And to get you there, most of our flights use a Swissair service - definitely a cut above your standard charter flight, but at no extra cost.

Then there are our Ski Guides - expert skiers and group leaders who've dedicated to helping you get the most out of your holiday, on and off the mountain.

On the accommodation side, you'll find that we offer a range of options - Chalets, Premier Chalets, Clubhotels and Premiere Clubhotels. We offer a range of prices too, from £60 for a one week chalet holiday in low season to around £700 for two weeks in a luxurious Premier Chalet in high season.

For more information, send for our brochure. But don't wait too long. Thousands of people have already promised themselves another Mark Warner holiday.

Mark Warner, 20 Kensington Church Street, London W8 4EP.
Telephone: 01-838 1851

Mark Warner



1. Decide on Cairngorm, Glenshee or the Lecht. They all offer unbeatable midweek packages for experts, first-timers and families alike. Include Glencoe and you have four great weekend resorts, too.

TWO TIPS ABOUT SKIING IN SCOTLAND

2. Send for your free Ski Holidays Scotland 1988/89 brochure, which contains full details about our accommodation and holiday packages. Post the coupon or call Hi-Line on 0349 63434 for immediate bookings. Or visit your local ABTA travel agent.

To: Ski Holidays Scotland,
Hi-Line, Dingwall, Ross-shire
IV15 9SL. Please send me my free
copy of Ski Holidays Scotland
1988/89.

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THE WAY IT WAS...

Would you believe in the late 1970s Mark Warner was offering a week in a chalet from £160. And Scotland was a major destination for British skiers, with train-loads of enthusiasts leaving London and major cities to arrive in Aviemore, where a large tourism industry built up - and indeed the area still boasts ski tourism and is in other season Britain's leading activities centre, with every kind of action from hiking and biking to mountaineering and hill walking to hunting, shooting and fishing and watersports on both river and lakes. As well as some of the country's finest hotels.

SKI. EXPRESS



...that'll do nicely!

There's an electric moment in the film of Agatha Christie's *Murder on the Orient Express*. The head-sleeping cars noticeably brighten as power surges from the engine. Then, almost imperceptibly, the wheels begin to move. It's the start of a universal romance: a long-distance train journey through the night. John Hazel climbs aboard.

Imagine starting a ski holiday like that. No 6am check-ins at Garwick standing behind hundreds of other bleary-eyed people. No hours of queuing for luggage at Geneva.

No grim-faced grind in a coach or car to Moutiers and beyond, struggling to reach the giant ski playgrounds of the Vanoise and the resorts of Val Thorens, Courchevel and further up the valley Les Arcs, La Plagne and on to Val d'Isère.

The Ski Express from London's Victoria, doesn't look cheap: a total of £350 to carry an average family saloon from Dover to Moutiers (ferry prices included) with two adults and two children sharing a six-berth second class couchette (£90 dearer for 1st class).

But then compare it with the cost of driving to the Alps with petrol, road tolls and a likely overnight stop and then think of the traffic jams that blight the road from Albertville to Moutiers and beyond — often up to 14 hours long — and the gain in value starts to outweigh the

cost. We found both sleeping berths and couchettes firm and surprisingly comfortable and, with the extra-heavyweight chassis of the Wagon-Lit stock, the ride was far more even than we expected.

The only problem was that neither sleepers nor couchettes are air conditioned. This meant that the compartment windows, though thick and toughened, had to be lowered for air and even when closed weren't very soundproof.

Noise didn't affect us much, though, except at Amiens where the train stopped at about 10.30pm to pick up more cars and where half an hour's loudspeaker instructions had a decidedly anti-night-cap effect.

On waking, our hearts beat faster as we peered out to a rosy glow that merged into a powder-blue sky over the mountains between Albertville and Moutiers. Smells of coffee and fresh croissants wafted down the corridor.

We reached Moutiers at 7.57am — precisely on time. Cars were unloaded for us

during breakfast and then it was just a 45 minute drive to our destination, La Plagne, the now-famous group of six modern stations and four traditional villages sprinkled round the 125 mile ski area high in the Vanoise.

Ancient lead-mining developments have given way to new purpose-built satellites ranging from the stark Sixties functionalism of Plagne Centre through the strikingly avant-garde of Aime La Plagne and Plagne Bellecote to the gentler and more chalet-style architecture of Belle Plagne, Plagne Villages and

Plagne 1800. None is pretty, but they are not half convenient. The other centres: Montalbert, Montchavin, Les Coches and Champagny are all traditional villages.

We stayed in Belle Plagne with Erna Low and were glad of a car because, although there are regular shuttle buses between centres, a car is best for general mobility plus visiting nearby resorts such as Les Arcs (45 minutes) and Val d'Isère. Tignes (an hour) where the La Plagne lift pass is valid for a day in each, or Courchevel and the Three Valleys (also an hour's drive).



Another popular form of ski transport in the 1980s was the train - this time to the French Alps. In those days the autoroutes were not either major or indeed complete so Brits would load their cars on the train at London Victoria and take the overnight ski train to Moutiers, arriving at 8 a.m. You slept in a couchette and the cost was cheaper than driving - petrol, tolls and ferry crossing. You could if wealthy go on the Orient Express, which in those days would stop at Innsbruck or St Anton for any skiers on board.