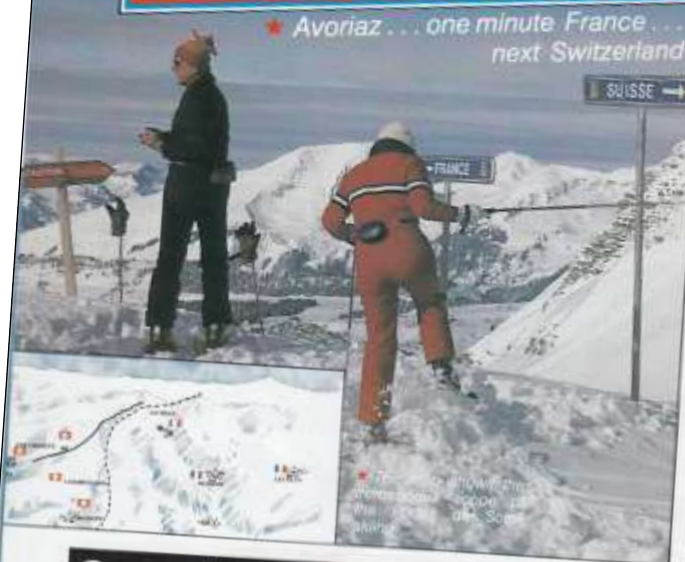


Skiing without

★ Avoriaz . . . one minute France . . . next Switzerland



If The Martians ever land at Avoriaz they will fit in easily among the futuristic flats and skyscraper blocks.

The real skier will feel equally at home in this space-age French resort.

For Avoriaz, perched 1,800 metres up in the mountains on the Franco-Swiss border, is at the heart of the Portes de Soleil (Gates of the Sun) ski region—immense area with up to 350 miles of skiing in at least seven villages on the same lift pass. And you can ski in both France and Switzerland.

The variety is staggering . . . from the gentlest nursery slopes to long confidence-building, style-flattering runs for holiday skiers, and testing descents and endless off-piste opportunities for the experts.

The run from the top of the French Chavanette area into Switzerland is called The Wall by locals. "Wall of death" more like crooked a young English wit who flinched at the sight of the drop at the start. Fall here and you could bounce all the way into Switzerland—if one of the moguls doesn't swallow you first.

The Wall is an exhilarating swoop to the resorts of Les Crosets, Champéry and Champoussin, and miles of skiing.

When I dropped out the Wall it was about my first run of the day and as I struggled with icy moguls and screaming ski muscles I wished I had taken the chair-lift down. It was comforting indeed to see the Swiss flags fluttering ahead. I thought I just might need the Red Cross!

Avoriaz has its own good skiing too, and it is linked with the French town of Morzine, which is in turn linked to Les Gets.

The Portes de Soleil has an interesting round trip for distance skiers, starting either at Morzine or Avoriaz (see map). You head for The Wall and ski down to Les Crosets, up to Planchau then a lovely long descent to the pretty old Swiss village of Champéry. Then make your way back to Les Crosets, up to Pointe de Mossels for a long easy run down the valley to Avoriaz and Morzine.

Morzine is well worth a visit—a charming old Savoy town lower down the mountains with lower prices to match.

But for skiers, Avoriaz is the place. It may be full of block after block of multi-storey flats, but I do like leaving my apartment in the morning, walking to the lift, pressing a button marked piste and being on my skis a minute later.

Skiers do moan about the restricted access to the vast snow bowls on the Swiss side—just one Poma link which tends to clog up at peak times.

There are also groans about the high prices and lack of variety of nightlife, but you can't have everything, and many, many skiers will pay a lot for the quality skiing Avoriaz offers.

Our unique service for all skiers

Our hire service is like no other - we not only provide a comprehensive range of ski-wear for hire, but we also remember all the extras that have to be bought before any ski holiday. Our long and detailed experience of skiing has enabled us to put together our unique, quality **Country Sports Ski Pak**.

The **Country Sports Ski Pak** includes the following vital items: a super ski suit that is yours for the duration of your holiday, and **FREE** for you to keep after your holiday—a hat, mittens, socks, goggles, high altitude cream, lip salve and ski clips. All these items are contained in the exclusive **Country Sports** ski bag.

Ski Pak	£25	up to 15 days
Salopettes	£7	up to 15 days
Salopette Suit	£15	up to 15 days
Racing Suit	£20	up to 15 days
Racing Pants	£10	up to 15 days
Ski Boots	£10	up to 15 days



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French skiing...

The Portes du Soleil in France was the first mega ski region promoted by The GSG.

FRONTIERS By the Editor



The APRES SKI slopes of Avonaz are interesting... Especially during the resort's January film festival. Some of the loveliest women in France pour in to add a touch of glamour. The girls are hoping to catch an eye (or more) of their favourite stars who attend to either watch or judge the horror movies.

The fur-coat and no-ski-gear brigade promenades about the resort clutching poodles instead of ski sticks, and presenting a hazardous distraction for wide-eyed fellas liable to fall off their skis.

I've seen a great many odd ski sights—everything from lilted skiers to nude streaking skiers and even a 20-stone American lady on short skis. At Avonaz I was able to add another to the odd list.

The resort's Tunisian restaurant, has a belly dancer. I couldn't believe my eyes. Back to the skiing, however. You can buy lessons in powder and heliskiing. Cross-country lovers have 12 miles of prepared trails and long treks.

Scottish ski instructor David Dalrymple, from Glenshee, was in the Portes de Soleil to test a lift operator's claim that you can ski the Alps cheaper than Scotland. His mission was far from his mind when I saw him swooning with delight after his umpteenth powder run.

Snow-covered from the waist down he cooed with delight. "Jeez John. This is magic. I've been up to my knees in it, up to my waist in it. I've never seen anything like it. How could I say anything bad about this."

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• Good Ski Guide editor John Hill is author of two ski books and publisher of the last 4 editions of the Ski Guide.

Diabolical Liberties

"We're diabolically striking"

—Diavolezza brochure

The ski people who give us so much fun on the slopes amuse us further with their attempts at English translation. Last season's funniest effort was an advert from Bormio, Italy, for natural steam caves which give the sauna effect.

"A steaming grot in winter will work you wonders" or words similar proclaimed the poster. After much guffawing from English speaking visitors it was changed to: "A steaming cave in winter for a wonderful experience". Ah well, they tried.

Instructors are always good for a laugh, especially when they urge young ladies to "Make a good body shape" or worse still "Do a good turn for me please".

A Zugspitze instructor had classes roaring with laughter when he exhorted pupils: "Quiet with the body please. Quiet with the bottom".

At Kitzbühel a well-meaning hotelier brought the house down when he offered to introduce me to the "local agent for the KGB". He meant, of course, the SCGB.

Here are a few of the clangers spotted by our reporters: "Skiers must not handle the lift attendants" ... St Moritz. "No unhooking will lead to unlimited persecution" ... St Moritz. "After 8pm it is unhooking through the trees" ... Kitzbühel. "You will not keep skiing to take a waitress" ... St Moritz. "You will not keep windows open at night, it is dangerous to make wind" ... Meribel hotel. "Ce soir—Batch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid" ... Bourg cinema. Talking about botches, how about the Diabolical Liberties leaflet which boasts the resort is "Diabolically striking".

More diabolical liberties with the English language next year. Please send us any you spot—we'll pay £3 for each one printed—and give you a ski gift too.

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Fun with Diabolical Liberties

Diabolical Liberties was a fun column having a smirk at the funny way foreigners spoke English. There were some classic quotes on hotel boards such as - After 8 p.m. it is essential to take advantage of the waitress. And – "No playing with yourself in the bath."