**Les Arcs**

**Categories**

**Good For**

Beginners

Intermediates

Experts

Snowboarders

Snow reliability

**Data**

**Beginner Runs**

56

**Intermediate Runs**

33

**Advanced Runs**

18

**Total Runs**

107

**Lifts**

49

**Chairs**

29

**Drags**

16

**Gondola Cable Cars**

4

**Parks**

1

**Pipes**

0

**Weather**

**Annual Snowfall**

3m (9.9 ft).

**Overview**

Few ski areas rival Les Arcs ski resort for its variety of skiing and reputation as an avant-garde, innovative and pioneering destination for snow sports. With its lift link to La Plagne forming the massive Paradiski ski area, Les Arcs offers some of the best and most extensive skiing in the world.

The ski resort is also one of the easiest in the Alps to reach by rail, with a direct Eurostar train service from London St Pancras taking just eight hours to reach the ski area and other services from Paris. A seven-minute funicular ride will then deliver visitors to Arc 1600, directly from the train station.

Les Arcs is made up of a series of high ‘villages': Arc 1600, 1800, 1950 and 2000 (whose names refer to altitude). All but 1950 were built in the 1960 and 70s, and as a result have some dated architecture. But recent developments have given a fresh look to most of the bases, particularly Edenarc at Arc 1800. All bases, both new and old, benefit from the exceptional convenience of ski-in/ski-out access to virtually all accommodation.

Arc 1950 is also a relatively new development and was the first in Europe to be built by Intrawest, the company behind highly successful North American resort developments such as Whistler Blackcomb – although it’s now run by French company Pierre & Vacances.

Arc 1800, meanwhile, has the majority of the resort's nightlife – the other three bases are quieter. Those who want to ski fast and hard all day and party at night won't find much better than this village.

**Location**

Les Arcs is situated in the Tarentaise region of France in the French Alps, above the town of Bourg-Saint-Maurice. It is located in the Aiguilles de Chamonix mountain chain, which peaks at the top of Mont Blanc (4,807m/15,771ft).

**Website**

http://www.lesarcs.com

**Piste Map**

http://en.lesarcs.com/piste-map

**Hit The Slopes**

Snow conditions in Les Arcs are generally reliable since the resort is so high, but an arsenal of snow-making equipment has been developed to combat any issues, including the creation of a huge artificial lake to supply the whole network of cultivated snow. The season here generally runs from early December until late April.

The lifts are generally fast and efficient, and ongoing investment in ever more new lifts has reduced queuing to a maximum of 10 minutes, even at peak times.

Les Arcs has fantastic on- and off-piste skiing to suit all abilities. One of the great features of Les Arcs is that a mixed ability group can enjoy great skiing and meet up for lunch – the skiing above Arc 2000, for instance, is ideal for this.

Beginner and intermediate runs can get busy, although the Peisey-Vallandry area often avoids the worst of this. For advanced/expert skiers and boarders, the black runs from the top of Aiguille Rouge are varied and exciting, with over 2,000m (6,500ft) of vertical plus plenty of off-piste options either side. Les Arcs is also famous for the extremely steep Flying Kilometre slope, which is still used for competition but is not open to the public.

The École du Ski Français (ESF) (tel: 04 7907 4752; [esf-arc-2000.com](http://esf-arc-2000.com)) in Arc 2000 (there are also ESF schools in Arc 1600, Arc 1800 and Arc 1950) introduced the pioneering *ski évolutif* method of learning to ski in the parallel position from day one, by starting on short skis and gradually extending the ski length. This has now been replaced by more standard tuition, as ski design has changed to the easier to use modern shape; but the *ski évolutif* technique was copied by resorts worldwide at the time and symbolises Les Arcs' pioneering approach to snow sports.

**Les Arcs**

**Resort**

1600

**Base**

1200

**Top**

3226

**General**

**Beyond The Slopes**

There are plenty of activities in Les Arcs to keep all ages entertained. Outdoor options include ice skating in Arc 2000, snowshoeing, tobogganing, dog sledding, paragliding, speed riding (skiing wearing a small paragliding sail) and skijoring (skiing pulled behind a horse). A fun activity is sledging on the Rodeo Park slope, which is aimed primarily at adults and teenagers.

Indoor activities include cinemas in Arc 2000, a gym in Arc 1800 and bowling alleys in Arc 2000 and Arc 1800. The Deep Nature Spa (tel: 04 7941 4290; [www.arc1950.com](http://www.arc1950.com)) is a relatively new addition in Arc 1950 and is the biggest wellness centre in the Alps. Among its wide-ranging features are a swimming pool with views of Mont Blanc, a fitness centre, spa, sauna, hammam and wellness treatments. There are also spas and fitness rooms in every residence of Arc 1950 village, as well as in Hôtel du Golf (tel: 04 7941 4343; [www.golf-hotel-lesarcs.com](http://www.golf-hotel-lesarcs.com)) in Arc 1800.

**Family Fun**

Arc 1800 has a children's area featuring moving carpets, a climbing wall and toboggan track. There's also a ‘discovery' piste at Arc 1600, where kids can learn about Alpine wildlife. Other activities include snowshoeing tours, ice skating, dog sled rides and a visit to the ice cave.

Children's ski schools and day care facilities at all villages are generally well regarded, especially The Garderie (Residence Les Laurières; tel: 04 7904 2431) in Arc 1800 and Cariboo’s Club (tel: 04 7907 0557; [www.cariboo1950.com](http://www.cariboo1950.com)) in Arc 1950.

**Retail Therapy**

Options are limited for shopaholics in Les Arcs, with little more than the rather predictable souvenir retailers and ski shops found in most ski resorts. There is more of a choice down in Bourg-Saint-Maurice, but the area is not really the place to be for those who list shopping as one of the key factors in choosing a destination.

Foodies have a few interesting options, however, including Le Refuge du Jamon (Les Villards; tel: 04 7907 4582; [www.le-refuge-du-jambon.com](http://www.le-refuge-du-jambon.com)) in Arc 1800, which is practically overflowing with local cured meats.

**Splashing Out**

Although heli-skiing is forbidden in the French Alps, it’s still available with a pick-up from Helimountains (tel: 06 1174 3883; [www.helimountains.com](http://www.helimountains.com)) in Les Arcs. The company then drops skiers over in Italy at Col du Petit St Bernar, where a pilot picks customers up and transfers them to a summit (Le Ruitor, Le Mont Ouille, Miravidi or Les Cascades du Ruitor) for some exhilarating experiences.

**Apres Ski**

Arc 1800 is the liveliest spot for après-ski in Les Arcs. Options here include the Red Hot Saloon (Galerie des Villards; [www.redhotsaloon.com](http://www.redhotsaloon.com)), Le J.O. (Le Charvet; tel: 04 7907 4042), and Ambiente Café (place Basse de Villards; tel: 04 7907 4951; [www.ambientecafe.fr](http://www.ambientecafe.fr)), which all host live music.

Higher up, at Arc 1950, Les Belles Pintes (Refuge du Montagnard; tel: 04 7907 3542) is a lively Irish bar; while up at Arc 2000 Whistler’s Dream (le Chalet des Neiges; tel: 04 7904 1757) is a popular spot amongst younger skiers and boarders.

**Eating Out**

There is a good range of restaurants in Les Arcs, with the best choice available in Arc 1800, but some standout options in the other villages too.

In Arc 1600, Le Chalet de l'Arcelle (tel: 04 7904 2135; [www.larcelle.fr/chalet](http://www.larcelle.fr/chalet)) offers meals amid homely décor in an old chalet, while L’Arquebuse (place du Soleil; tel: 04 7900 2259; [www.restaurant-arquebuse.com](http://www.restaurant-arquebuse.com)) provides a good value option in the village with its lunchtime menu of the day.

Hemingway's (le Hameau du Glacier; tel: 04 7904 2551) is among the best offerings in Arc 1950 with its choice of French cuisine; while Le Chalet de Luigi (tel: 04 7900 1536; [www.restaurantchaletdeluigi.com](http://www.restaurantchaletdeluigi.com)) is good for pasta and specialities from its well-stocked Italian delicatessen.

Those at Arc 2000 are not forgotten when it comes to good food. Le Savoy (place Basse; tel: 04 7907 7300; [www.lesavoy-restaurant.com](http://www.lesavoy-restaurant.com)) is a nice place to eat in the village, while Les Chalets de l’Arc (tel: 04 7904 1540; [www.leschaletsdelarc.com](http://www.leschaletsdelarc.com)) on the slopes (but within easy reach of the village) is a beautiful chalet with traditional décor and a fireplace, serving traditional French food and specialties such as *le chaussondu boulanger* (a filled pastry dish) cooked in a wood-fired oven.

**Transport**

**Getting There**

Nearest airports: Chambéry Airport (CMF); Lyon-Saint Exupéry Airport (LYS); Geneva International Airport (GVA)

Distances to resort: 130km (80 miles); 200km (124 miles); 205km (127 miles);

Driving times: 1 hour 50 minutes; 2 hours 30 minutes; 2 hours 30 minutes;

Nearest railway station: Bourg-Saint-Maurice (with funicular link to Arc 1600 – free shuttles operate from here to Arc 1800, Arc 1950 and Arc 2000).

**Getting Around**

Les Arcs is accessed by road from Bourg-Saint-Maurice (but note that most villages are traffic free – cars must be parked outside) or by funicular railway from the town's station. Roads and ski lifts link the villages.

**Hotels**

The various villages that make up Les Arcs boast ski-in/ski-out facilities at virtually all accommodation; some of which is housed in stylish buildings created by famous architect Charlotte Perriand. Most of the accommodation is based in apartments and catered chalets, but there is a widening choice of hotels in Les Arcs.

**Résidence Pierre & Vacances Premium le Village**

These good value 5-star ski apartments in Arc 1950 are nestled amid the most attractive village in the area. A good option for families, couples or groups of friends, this residence includes swimming pools and a sauna, perfect for some post-ski relaxation.

**Category**

Luxury

**Thoroughfare**

Le Village Arc 1950

**Neighborhood**

XXX

**Locality**

Bourg-Saint-Maurice

**Sub Admin Area**

XXX

**Admin Area**

XXX

**Postcode**

XXX

**Country**

France

**Telephone**

08 9270 2180.

**Website**

http://www.pierreetvacances.com

**Chalet Tarentaise**

These basic self-catering apartments are set in the charming village of Le Pré, at the far end of the ski area. Guests here will enjoy the easy ski-in/ski-out access to the complex from the slopes.

**Category**

Moderate

**Thoroughfare**

Le Pré

**Neighborhood**

XXX

**Locality**

Villaroger

**Sub Admin Area**

XXX

**Admin Area**

XXX

**Postcode**

XXX

**Country**

France

**Telephone**

04 7906 9126.

**Website**

http://www.optimumski.com

**Belambra Clubs l’Aiguille Rouge**

This Arc 2000 resort offers good value ski-in/ski-out accommodation and free ski guiding. The resort is particularly good for families, with a number of child-friendly activities and services.

**Category**

Cheap

**Thoroughfare**

Arc 2000

**Neighborhood**

XXX

**Locality**

Bourg-Saint-Maurice

**Sub Admin Area**

XXX

**Admin Area**

XXX

**Postcode**

XXX

**Country**

France

**Telephone**

04 7907 5707.

**Website**

http://www.belambra.fr