**Méribel**

**Categories**

**Good For**

Beginners

Intermediates

Experts

Snowboarders

Families

Après ski

Snow reliability

**Data**

**Beginner Runs**

42

**Intermediate Runs**

23

**Advanced Runs**

8

**Total Runs**

73

**Lifts**

45

**Chairs**

17

**Drags**

13

**Gondola Cable Cars**

15

**Parks**

3

**Pipes**

2

**Weather**

**Annual Snowfall**

5m (16.4ft).

**Overview**

Located within the heart of the world’s largest ski area, Les Trois Vallées (The Three Valleys), granting easy access to 600km (372 miles) of piste, Méribel’s occupies a spot most modern ski resorts would kill for.

But this prime positioning is more an act of man, than an act of God, with the resort’s British founders foreseeing the long-term benefits of building a resort here, and complemented the location with conventional chalet-style architecture to purvey a traditional Alpine atmosphere. The result today is that Méribel is a very pleasant village to stay in, as well as ski from.

Méribel (along with its neighbour Méribel-Mottaret, which contains the concrete apartment blocks Méribel has managed to avoid) caters to all levels of skiing ability, which has helped make it one of the most popular centres in the world, especially favoured by British skiers and snowboarders.

Despite its traditional ambience and French charm, Méribel does not hold back when it comes to partying. Unlike many French resorts, which have a reputation for low-key nightlife, Méribel has become known on the ski scene for its choice of bars and venues in which to unwind into the small hours.

**Location**

Méribel lies in the Savoie region of the French Alps, above the town of Moûtiers, with Courchevel to the east, and Les Menuires and Val Thorens to the west. Méribel-Mottaret is a few hundred metres uphill from Méribel Centre, with the shapely peak of Mont du Vallon (2,952m/9,685ft) dominating the head of the valley beyond.

**Website**

http://www.meribel.net

**Piste Map**

http://ski-area.meribel.net/fileadmin/RM/Plan\_des\_pistes/plan\_meribel.pdf

**Hit The Slopes**

The ski season in Méribel lasts from early December to late April, and offers fairly reliable snow cover. Failing that, almost half of the slopes are armed with snow cannons that provide a constant white coating, as long as temperatures are low enough.

The lift system radiates from two central hubs at Chaudanne and Mottaret, linking Méribel to the neighbouring resorts of Courchevel, Les Menuires and Val Thorens, which make up the vast Trois Vallées area. This grouping of pistes is so big that skiers need not ski the same run twice during a week in the resort.

Méribel is a resort that welcomes newbies, with numerous intermediates runs, and good beginners' areas too. Beginners can practise on the green pistes below the Altiport, before progressing to the easy blues beneath the mid-station of the Tougnette chairlift and the Marmotte, Biche, Geai and Belette blues on the Saulire side.

Most intermediates will want to bag the Mauduit – a challenging red that was once an Olympic downhill course – and the two long, exhilarating red pistes that descend from the summit of Mont du Vallon.

Classic black runs include La Face (another former Olympic downhill) and the mogul fields of Les Bosses and Bartavelle. There’s also plenty of epic off-piste terrain on Mont du Vallon and Mont de la Chambre, and further off-piste action in nearby Courchevel and Val Thorens.

Freestylers can choose between two snow parks: one accessed via the Arpasson chairlift, and the other from the Plattières gondola.

**Méribel**

**Resort**

1450

**Base**

1100

**Top**

2952

**General**

**Beyond The Slopes**

Méribel continues to offer an increasing number of activities for non-skiers, on and off the slopes.

Out in the snow, non-skiers can try their hand at dog sledding, snowshoeing and snowmobiling. While indoors, the resort boasts an Olympic ice skating rink, swimming pool, cinema, bowling alley, and a comprehensive fitness area. For something a little different, take a 90-minute horse-drawn carriage tour of the resort or an hour-long tour to the lake.

Various wellness areas (featuring Jacuzzi, hammam, sauna and massage areas) are situated within the resort, while further options are available in the historic mountainside spa town of Brides-les-Bains, located a scenic gondola ride away. Here, the aesthetically alluring, Grand Spa des Alpes (tel: +33 479 552 344; [www.legrandspadesalpes.com](http://www.legrandspadesalpes.com)) comes highly recommended.

For further options, take a trip to the neighbouring town of Brides-les-Bains, which has a casino; or take to the air with a paragliding trip over the mountains with TandemTOP (tel: +33 479 004 567; [www.parapente-meribel.fr](http://www.parapente-meribel.fr)).

**Family Fun**

The École du ski Français (ESF) (tel: +33 479 086 031; [www.esf-meribel.com](http://www.esf-meribel.com)) operates 'Les Saturnins' day care for children aged 18 months to three years old and a ski kindergarten in the snow garden. Children can then progress to the usual group lessons taught to the French national testing standard throughout childhood.

If the little ones are tired of the piste, take them dog sledding or ice skating; or try out the water slides at Méribel's swimming pool (tel: +33 479 005 821).

Childcare services include the British-run Merinannies (tel: +44 7860 925 055; [www.merinannies.co.uk](http://www.merinannies.co.uk)) and the Meriski holiday agency (tel: +44 1285 648 518; [www.meriski.co.uk](http://www.meriski.co.uk)), the latter of which has its own crèche.

**Retail Therapy**

The main shopping offering in Méribel is tailored to ski gear and outdoor clothing. Check out Fat Face (Galerie des Cimes, route du Centre) for clothes; Freeride (tel: +33 479 004 241; [www.freeride.fr](http://www.freeride.fr)) for gear; and Méribel Optic (tel: +33 479 005 277; [www.meribel-optique.com](http://www.meribel-optique.com)) for sunglasses.

The resort also has a number of independent shops, including Le Maison Braissand (tel: +33 479 085 690; [www.maisonbraissand.com](http://www.maisonbraissand.com)), which offers homemade irresistible chocolates, ice cream and cakes.

**Splashing Out**

Treat yourself to a romantic, gourmet dinner at Restaurant Le Blanchot (tel: +33 479 005 578; www.[leblanchot.com](http://leblanchot.com)), with its great setting, intimate atmosphere, excellent cuisine and devilish desserts. The restaurant is also open during the day and has a large terrace nestled amongst the trees.

**Apres Ski**

Méribel’s different village bases have very different après ski scenes and it’s worth noting that villages like Mottaret, are located several kilometres from the main village area - reachable only by a limited bus service or expensive taxi ride.

The main Méribel village is usually one of the liveliest in the French Alps. The action kicks off at the Rond Point Bar (tel: +33 479 003 751; [www.rondpointmeribel.com](http://www.rondpointmeribel.com)) at the mid-station of the Rhodos gondola. Here, live bands play six days a week, from 1700 to 1900, with dance moves lubricated by Méribel's notorious toffee vodka.

Jack's Bar (Route de la Chaudanne) is another very popular venue with good drinks at affordable prices and a fun, lively atmosphere.

For a more relaxing evening, L’Aviatic Lounge Bar (tel: +33 479 005 232; [www.altiporthotel.fr](http://www.altiporthotel.fr)) offers fine wines and cocktails.

Cap off the night in Dick's Tea Bar (tel: +33 479 086 019; [www.dicksteabar.com](http://www.dicksteabar.com)), a venerable Méribel institution, where revellers can dance till 0400 to the resort's best line-up of resident and guest DJs.

**Eating Out**

Be prepared to reach deep into your pockets if you plan on dining out in the Trois Vallées. Eateries, including restaurants in Méribel, are notoriously expensive – although if you look beyond the main street and snow front, you’ll generally find lower prices.

Among the few reasonably priced options is Zig Zag (tel: +33 479 004 740), a cosy little lunch spot near the foot of the Ramées chairlift, and the on-site restaurant in the Le Croix Jean-Claude hotel (tel: +33 479 086 105; [www.croixjeanclaude.com](http://www.croixjeanclaude.com)) in nearby Les Allues, which offers inventive local cuisine using seasonal ingredients.

Those who like to splash out can flex the plastic at Altiport Hotel (tel: +33 479 005 232; [www.altiporthotel.fr](http://www.altiporthotel.fr)), which boasts not one, but three high-quality eateries; including Le Zinc Brasserie and L’Annexe, which serves regional specialities such as raclette and fondue.

Up at Mottaret, La Brizolee (tel: +33 479 004 670; [www.labrizolee.com](http://www.labrizolee.com)) has built a reputation for its extensive menu, friendly service and good value set menu.

**Transport**

**Getting There**

Nearest airports: Chambéry Airport (CMF); Geneva International Airport (GVA).

Distances to resort: 96km (60 miles); 180km (112 miles) respectively.

Driving times: 1 hour 15 minutes; 2 hours respectively.

Nearest railway station: Moûtiers.

Distance to resort: 19km (12 miles).

Driving time: 30 minutes.

**Getting Around**

A free bus service runs every half an hour, linking Chaudanne in the centre of Méribel to Mottaret, Rond Point, Altiport, Belvédère and Les Allues – this can often become very crowded during the peak season. Timetables are available from the tourist office.

It is possible to ski from Méribel to all the other resorts in the Trois Vallées ski area.

**Hotels**

Méribel features mostly pleasant chalet-style architecture and is one of the more tastefully designed French resorts, with a lot of individual chalets and low-rise buildings. Accommodation in Méribel is very much based around chalets, including a range of luxury options with saunas and hot tubs, as well as more budget-friendly versions. There is also a selection of excellent hotels in Méribel, though the majority are not cheap.

**Hotel Alpen Ruitor**

The Hotel Alpen Ruitor is a 4-star in Méribel Mottaret with ski-in/ski-out access, good-sized rooms, and a luxury spa offering traditional health treatments.

**Category**

Moderate

**Thoroughfare**

Le Laitelet

**Neighborhood**

XXX

**Locality**

Méribel Mottaret

**Sub Admin Area**

XXX

**Admin Area**

XXX

**Postcode**

F 73550

**Country**

France

**Telephone**

+33 479 004 848

**Website**

www.alpenruitor.com

**Hôtel Le Mottaret**

A popular 3-star ski-in/ski-out hotel based within Mottaret, the Hôtel Le Mottaret was fully renovated in 2013. Facilities here include a popular après-ski bar, a good-quality restaurant and an outdoor hot tub.

**Category**

Moderate

**Thoroughfare**

Le Châtelet

**Neighborhood**

XXX

**Locality**

Méribel-Mottaret

**Sub Admin Area**

XXX

**Admin Area**

XXX

**Postcode**

F 73550

**Country**

France

**Telephone**

+33 479 004 747

**Website**

www.hotellemottaret.com

**Chalet La Boua**

Barely a snowball throw from the lifts at Chaudanne, this cool little chalet offers well-priced bed and breakfast accommodation in stylish, wood-panelled bedrooms complete with en-suite bathrooms.

**Category**

Cheap

**Thoroughfare**

Route de la Chaudanne

**Neighborhood**

XXX

**Locality**

Méribel-Mottaret

**Sub Admin Area**

XXX

**Admin Area**

XXX

**Postcode**

F 73550CountryFr

**Country**

XXX

**Telephone**

www.laboua.fr

**Website**

A 4-star, ski-in/ski-out property, designed in a traditional chalet style, Le Grand Coeur places a strong onus on impeccable hospitality. Aside from the lavish rooms and suites, boasting complimentary Wi-Fi, one of the biggest draws here is the on-site restaurant, which serves a wide range of gourmet dishes created from regional ingredients

**Hotel Eliova**

A simple 2-star chain hotel with friendly staff, the Hotel Eliova is tucked away off the main road but is still only a short walk from the ski lifts and resort centre. The on-site restaurant has beautiful views overlooking the mountains.

**Category**

Cheap

**Thoroughfare**

XXX

**Neighborhood**

XXX

**Locality**

XXX

**Sub Admin Area**

XXX

**Admin Area**

XXX

**Postcode**

XXX

**Country**

XXX

**Telephone**

+33 147 425 181

**Website**

www.hotel-eliova-meribel.com