

**The Journal Reader Travel**



**Cheltenham Gold Cup 2011**

3 days from  
**£239.95pp**  
 Departing 16 March 2011

**Price includes:**  
 • Admission to the Best Mate Enclosure on both the Thursday and the Friday. (An upgrade to the Tattersalls Enclosure is offered on both days, subject to availability, at a supplement of £15 per person per day)  
 • 2 nights bed, dinner and full English breakfast accommodation at a 3 star Midlands area hotel  
 • Return coach transfers from the hotel to Cheltenham racecourse  
 • Return coach travel from Newcastle



**Royal Ascot 2011**

2 days from  
**£129.95pp**  
 Departing 15 June 2011

**Price includes:**  
 • Admission to the Silver Ring on Ladies' Day. (An upgrade to a Grandstand Admission ticket is offered, subject to availability, at a supplement of £45 per person)  
 • 1 night's bed and full English breakfast accommodation at a 3 or 4 star outer London area hotel  
 • A visit to Windsor  
 • Return coach travel from Newcastle



**London Eye & Thames River Cruise**

2 days from  
**£129.95pp**  
 Departing 4 June, 2 & 30 July and 27 August 2011

**Price includes:**  
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Organised by Omega Holidays, ABTA V4782. Single supplements apply. Subject to availability. Please note: Cheltenham Gold Cup is not available to book online.



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**A TRIP to the snowy French Alps was balanced out with warm hospitality, as RICHARD FLETCHER discovered.**

**W**HEN the announcement came through about heavy snow at Geneva airport, I quietly cheered and I don't think I was the only one.

Even though it meant a slight delay to the flight, there were certainly no complaints when heading out on a skiing holiday and I'm sure I saw several of my fellow passengers smiling as they waited at the gate to board the plane.

Geneva is just over an hour's drive from Morzine, the location of the TGski chalet, and means it's easy to reach without having to break the bank on travel.

The approach to the airport is pretty impressive, too, with views of lakes, mountains and snow, giving a taste of what's to come. The other taste to come that I was looking forward to was the promise on the website that 'your wine will never run dry'. This sounded like my kind of place.

I was impressed that people from TGski came to meet me in the company Land Rover, and it's not a one-off: work commitments permitting, they try to come out and transport as many people as possible to and from the airport – all part of TG's more personalised service as I was about to find out. They even patiently listened to my rubbish story about how, like a buffoon, I had somehow got lost on the straight corridor from the plane to the arrivals hall. TG had clearly chosen its employees well.

If they are unable to make it, there are plenty of companies offering transfers, with competition keeping prices down.

I quickly realised two things about TGski: one was that they purposely marked themselves out by attending to the details, tailored more to suit a slightly younger audience than the typical chalet market. The other was that, while the location is wonderful, the snowboarding great and the chalet homely, what really made the holiday was the people. Our chalet hosts, Cat and Gus,

greeted us like guests into their home when we arrived, which was lovely. If only this genuinely was your home; the stunning views, hot tub, sauna and games room – not to mention the ski slopes being within walking distance – would most probably occupy all your time.

We felt even more like guests when we were told they were working on preparing dinner and that we could spend some time relaxing and unpacking before pre-dinner snacks and drinks were served. Like most blokes, unpacking and settling in aren't high on my priority list so I set off for the hot tub instead. Now this was something – a quick skip over the snow saw me happily installed in the outdoor hot tub, looking out across the lights of the town in the valley to the floodlit skiing slope opposite. The fact that it was still snowing made it a great experience, with the steam coming off the water turning the flakes into a fine rain – magical. It was here we got to meet fellow guests and getting to chat to people made it feel like a little community.

Again at dinner, the attention to detail showed, as Gus explained they want to create a dinner party atmosphere each evening. It certainly didn't feel like a communal dining room, but more like being entertained by friends, and they popped in from the kitchen to chat or to explain the dishes.

The food was excellent. The chalet hosts are not trained chefs, and nor is there an a la carte menu, but then if there was the price would be much higher. Instead, TGski have put in some time to ensure high-quality food without the expense. The directors spend time looking at what's in fashion, checking out recipes and testing them on friends, and then the week before the season starts the hosts learn to make the dishes. The first day saw a starter of goat's cheese on bruschetta with homemade caramelised red onion marmalade; Thai fishcakes with a green Thai sauce for main,



**Warm welcome to French Alps**

and finished off with a white chocolate mousse. The quality continued on subsequent days; starters of mozzarella and tomato towers with thickened balsamic dressing, and mint and parma ham salad with caramelised peaches, were followed by mains of beef bourguignon and lemon and herb chicken with risotto. There was also a French day with onion soup and tartiflette, a traditional mountain dish with potatoes, cheese and bacon. The desserts of lemon tart and gooey chocolate bombs also went down very well.

If you stayed for long enough then the same dishes would eventually come round again – it's not a continually evolving menu. But judging from everyone's reaction at the dinner table there wouldn't be any complaints.

The other great thing was the wine. The reds were warmed by the log fire along with the after dinner port, which was accompanied by a good selection of cheeses served in the lounge area. It was a lovely way to finish the meal, accompanied by music or a game on the X Box Kinect.

Now for the reason for the trip: the skiing. Or in my case snowboarding which, given the heavy snowfall the day before, was awesome – or 'sick' as I think true snowboarders would probably say. I'm not one of them and would describe myself as a low intermediate, but Morzine offers plenty of runs for people like me. There are lots of hills in the Portes du Soleil and there are two bubble lifts running in opposite directions from Morzine to the mountains on either side of the town.

**“**How many of you have tried sledging? And how many of you have REALLY tried sledging?**”**



**CHALET CHIC** Luxury accommodation Alpine style

our toes with a very quick hand on the steering. The next day we also took some time out from the slopes to explore the town, which had some impressively old buildings with beautifully carved woodwork. It would have been worth spending a bit more time looking round but when the boarding's good, it's always going to take priority. Morzine with TGski is a great place and the extra effort the company puts in makes it feel friendly and welcoming, like you're staying with friends, from the wake-up smoothies to the origami shapes containing sweets on the pillow. There are other chalet holidays with hosts, but the little details make the difference – the carefully chosen friendly staff, the dinner party feel to meals and, wonderfully, afternoon tea and homemade cake for those back early – these are the things that make this something special.

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The Norfolk Hotel and The Norfolk Lodge Hotel are two different hotels, the special offer applies to the Norfolk Lodge, Monterey, & Fort D'Auvergne hotels only.

To receive a free Jersey coloured brochure, call The Journal Reader Travel Department on 0191 2016000 or call into Front Reception, Groat Market, Newcastle, NE1 1ED.



**CHALET CHIC** Luxury accommodation Alpine style

**INFORMATION**

TGSKI has several properties. Chalet Amis and Chalet Roc Soleil offer luxury which includes cooked and buffet breakfast with fresh pastries and fruit, and three course dinner followed by cheese board and port, as well as all the extras. There are also shuttles to and from the slopes each day, and ski hosting is available to get you quickly orientated round the ski hills. Prices for a fully catered week-long stay range from £435 to £795 dependent on the week. The package does not include flights,

airport transfers, ski pass or ski hire. There is also the new chalet, Petit Amis, which sleeps up to 10, and all five bedrooms have balconies and ensuite. TG Ski Lite is a cheaper version of the TGski experience which also allows for shorter breaks, at Chalet Miramar. It includes b&b, and evening meals each night for £10. Week-long stays from £250, and three-day long weekends from £130.

**Reader offer – 25% off all holidays\* in February for all Journal readers \* Subject to availability**

**TheJournal READER TRAVEL**



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**The price includes:**  
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