

LET IT SNOW

A medical doctor explores the numerous delights of Courchevel.

By ELAINE KIM





I have heard Courchevel referred to with a number of superlative accolades – the St Tropez of the ski slopes; the playground of

with 1850 being the poster child of the region, brimming with glitz and glamour, and 1650 being laid-back and understated. We had opted for a taste of both worlds, and first

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the rich and royal. Neither ultra-rich, royalty nor celebrities, we nonetheless boldly planned a family holiday in this winter wonderland.

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headed for our leg at 1650.

Somewhat confusingly, the villages, which had previously been identified by altitude, had recently been renamed: 1300 was now Le Praz, 1650 now Moriond and 1850

The Cheval Blanc hotel houses the two-Michelin-starred Le 1947 by Yannick Alleno.



The 34-suite Cheval Blanc is owned by LVMH's Bernard Arnault.

WHERE TO STAY

In Moriond (1650): Le Portetta Mountain Lodges. These ski-in, ski-out lodges are nestled in the trees. Ski lifts are easily accessed thanks to a private car and chauffeur included in the stay. www.laportetta.com

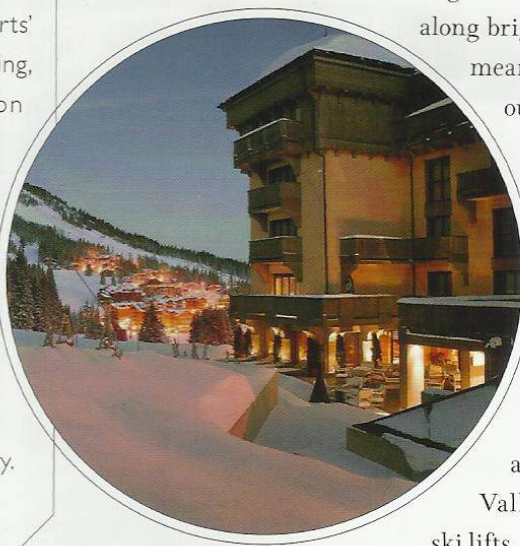
In Courchevel (1850): Le Melezin is Aman Resorts' European ski-lodge offering, situated perfectly on the Bellecote ski slope and close to the glamorous epicentre of Courchevel. The hotel offers every luxury in its 31 guest rooms, indoor pool, spa, hammam and restaurant, delivered with faultless Aman-style hospitality. www.amanresorts.com

Chalet Marmotte is a four-bedroom lodge in the Belvedere area of 1650 Moriond.

Le Melezin is incredibly luxurious, even as it remains in appearance one of the most understated properties in 1850.

became Courchevel. Our Tomtom GPS wouldn't accept Courchevel 1650 as a destination and brought us to the centre of 1850, which gave us a first glimpse of the famous village – a pretty collection of wood-clad buildings with jovial groups of people strolling along brightly lit pavements. After some meandering, we eventually figured out that we needed to tell the GPS to take us to Moriond and wound our way to 1650.

Chalet Marmotte is a four-bedroom lodge in the Belvedere area of 1650 Moriond. The mountain lodges are part of Le Portetta, the hotel being five minutes away at the foot of the Trois Vallées slopes next to the main ski lifts.



A chauffeured car is on hand to shuttle lodge residents to the main building. After breakfast, we headed there to rent our ski gear from the well-stocked Portetta shop. The affable Sebastien coaxed my two-year-old Kyan into his first set of ski boots, helmet and goggles and then we trundled out into the snow. We took Kyan to slide around in the soft powder - it was his first time playing in the

mountains. The elongated bathroom was unfussy in style, but extravagant in its spaciousness, with heated stone floors and a deep soaking bathtub, double vanities and walk-in wardrobes.

The hotel car is always on hand to take guests to Courchevel's village centre, where a gondola takes sledders up to the sledging run, the longest in France and lit after dark. When

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snow and a delight to watch. When asked if he wanted to go again, he replied sensibly: "Yes! But not so fast."

From here, we moved on to Le Melezin in 1850. Like most other Aman Resorts, its sleek, minimalist Ed Tuttle design has a touch of Asian aesthetic.

Our suite, with its tall picture windows in the spacious living area and large bedroom, afforded 180-degree views of the pistes and

the lights have gone out on the slopes, the Aman spa beckons. I spent my last evening cosseted in this pampering enclave, and fell into bed after dinner to drift into such a deep, restorative slumber, that I left the next morning so relaxed it seemed like I had spent the week on a spa retreat rather than an activity-packed ski vacation. Would I be coming back? Borrowing the words from my toddler: "Yes! But not so fast." ❄️



Chalet Blanchot offers direct access to the pistes of Les Trois Vallées.