



## FAST FACTS

**Destination** La Plagne, French Alps  
**Currency** euros (€)  
**Time difference** +1 GMT  
**Flight destination** Geneva, Lyon, Grenoble, Chambéry  
**Flight cost** First week in March, LGW-Lyons with easyJet, around £55pp  
**Ski pass** €203 for Paradiski adult six-day pass  
**Best time to go**  
 Powder: January-February;  
 Warmth: March-April

Part of the Paradiski area, 83 per cent of the resort is above 2,000m – and, with a glacier at 3,250m, you'll not be wanting for snow. There are 130 pistes: 16 black runs, 34 reds, 70 blues and 10 greens. Experts might fancy the off-piste route, the Bellecote Northern Face: a First Tracks ticket enables riders to tag along with ski patrol before sunrise.

## LA PLAGNE

## Ice scream

As well as extreme skiing and snowboarding, the resort of La Plagne in France caters for everything from mono bobs to airboarding for the ultimate winter rush



Here at *Sport*, we like our winter sports resorts to churn up a few 'extras'. Sure, we expect a range of pistes to satisfy our ski and snowboard needs, but we're always looking for something different. And the French resort of La Plagne, which offers unique adventure activities from ice climbing to dog-sledding, ticks all the boxes.

Nestled in the western Alps, La Plagne offers everything from black runs to freestyle terrain parks to keep you entertained on the slopes; but it also provides some action-packed adventures to help spice up your holiday. You can test your head for heights on Europe's highest ice-climbing tower in Champagny en Vanoise – just grab two small ice picks, don some fetching climbing shoes complete with spikes, and head skywards.

If you prefer your extreme sports more down to, er, snow, then try the sled-like mono bob. There's no steering, no brake... just you lying



face up on your sled and going feet first down the Olympic bobsleigh run at speeds of up to 55mph. And there is also a 60-degree inclined jump (with a handy bouncy castle-like landing base) so you can live the dreams of Eddie the Eagle.

To keep your inner child giggling, there are also the 'sliding' toys. The Airboard, a winter equivalent of the boogie board, is a stumpy lilo-type contraption that allows you to bomb head first down the slope. BMX-alike, the SMX – with short skis instead of wheels – can be used to do tricks; while the Zipfy, Yooner and Speedel Snow all provide various exciting ways of getting down the snowy inclines on your arse... at pace.

Adding animals into the mix, you can also try dog-sledding. Standing on the wooden 'rails' at the back of the sled and shouting instructions to your lead dog, you're dragged by three canine friends across fields, through ditches and over roads. It's the ultimate

example of man and beast working together for the greater good – or, more accurately, just a lot of fun.

After all this excitement you will need a nice, cosy place to stay, and what can possibly be cosier than a night in an igloo? You take a lantern-lit 15-minute snowy walk to your igloo ([www.monvillageigloo.com](http://www.monvillageigloo.com)), which is kitted out with campbeds and thick sleeping bags. With candles in hollowed-out, snowy shelves and your breath frozen, it is an enchanting environment in which to sleep and will give you the quietest, most Narnia-like night of your life. Low cloud sits in the valley and, at dawn, the mighty Mont Blanc reveals itself on a clear morning. That's assuming you can move your lactic-acid laden body out of your sleeping-bag cocoon following all the extreme sports you've been doing.

JO GUNSTON

For more on the activities mentioned above and the Paradiski area, visit [www.la-plagne.com](http://www.la-plagne.com)