

# Travel

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**'I can't believe I'm in the town of Trinidad where recently there was just one decent hotel'**

Lydia Bell on a Cuban boutique hotel revolution

The sleek blond wood interior of Chalet Moriond (2). Courchevel 1650; Chalet Hinterdorf (1), Zermatt



## The 20 sexiest ski chalets

From a house with its own cinema and pool to a party pad with rooftop hot tub, **Annabelle Thorpe** picks the best places

### Best for romance 1 Chalet Hinterdorf Zermatt, Switzerland

In the heart of Zermatt's picture-perfect old village, Hinterdorf is the kind of super-cosy bolt hole that's almost impossible to leave. It's compact — it was once an old sheep barn — and

retains the 18th-century façade, while inside, a clever conversion has created two sleek bedrooms and a lovely living/dining area and kitchen on the third floor. Also packed in is a sauna and a wine cellar with a great selection of local wines from the Valais.

**Details** From £1,500 per week self-catered for four (020 3282 7561, [ski-boutique.co.uk](http://ski-boutique.co.uk))

### Best for contemporary style

#### 2 Chalet Moriond Courchevel 1650, France

A stunning house that's perfect for families, with its own pool, cinema room and pool table, Moriond merges classic chalet style — exposed brick, blond wood — with sleek modern furniture. The restaurants and bars of 1650 are a stroll away but a private chef can be arranged, as can a spa therapist — and there's an in-house hammam for soothing post-piste aches.



**Details** From £9,616 self-catered for ten in five bedrooms (020 3432 7784, [firefly-collection.com](http://firefly-collection.com))

### Best for rustic chic 3 La Ferme Megève, France

One of the oldest buildings in the Megève valley, this gorgeous 17th-century farmhouse has been restored to create a ski chalet in two halves: a cavernous, open-plan living space on the ground floor and cosy, wood-panelled bedrooms above. Four of the six bedrooms are en suite, and the alfresco hot-tub and log fire in the ►





lounge ramp up the decadence factor.  
**Details** From £5,300 per week, self-catered for 13 (holidaylettings.co.uk, reference 184566)

### Best for boutique hotel style

#### 4 Chalet du Vallon Méribel, France

If you want a chalet that feels like your very own private hotel (and are willing to splurge), du Vallon comes with everything from daily newspapers and a film library to champagne and canapés each evening and a dedicated driver and chef. It's a wonderfully light, airy chalet that's just two minutes' walk from the Golf chairlifts, which head up to the Three Valleys. Luxurious without being ostentatious, it's a good choice for families.

**Details** From £7,889 per week, fully catered for eight in four bedrooms (07518 582147, averycrestchalets.com)

### Best for ski in, ski out

#### 5 Chalet le Vieux Bisse Crans Montana, Switzerland

The X-factor with le Vieux Bisse is that you can ski straight from the chalet to Les Violettes lift station, which links to the Cry d'Er area. The house itself is a contemporary space that offers serious comfort without being intimidating if you have kids in tow. Whitewashed walls, thick fake-fur throws and local wood used for everything from lampstands to the dining table creates a pleasingly cosy feel.

**Details** From £3,427, self-catered for ten in five bedrooms (0845 618 2205, akvillas.com)

### Best for peace and quiet

#### 6 Forest Chalet

Geilo, Norway

New for 2014, this traditional Scandi cabin is surrounded by tranquil woodland, although Geilo's well-groomed pistes are just a five-minute walk away. Forest is furnished in traditional log-cabin style and it has a spacious living area with an open fire and four cosy bedrooms. Geilo is a fantastic family resort, with its wide, quiet pistes and a pretty village with a smattering of cafés and bars.

**Details** From £439pp per week, including flights and full board, for eight (020 8939 0726, crystalski.co.uk)

### Best off the beaten track

#### 7 Chalet Tux Diamond Lanersbach, Austria

If you don't want to stay in a big resort, Lanersbach — a classic Tyrolean village — is a great choice. Owners Tim and Sally are on hand to offer help with everything from making restaurant bookings to tips on the best pistes nearby; the Eggalm lift opposite the house connects with the Mayrhofen ski area. The house is light and modern, with five spacious bedrooms (two en suite), a main bathroom with sunken corner bath and double shower, a state-of-the-art kitchen and a huge south-facing balcony for sunny afternoons.

**Details** From £2,210 per week, self-catered, for ten (homeaway.co.uk, reference 809013)



### Best for families with teens

#### 8 Chalet Rimaye Chamonix, France

The second lounge at Rimaye has a home cinema and there's wi-fi throughout the chalet, so teens will be happy. Chamonix is a lively resort in terms of après-ski, but the house is a five-minute hop from town, making it easy to leave the post-piste carousing behind. The chalet is classic without being chintzy; a central log fire gives the entire living area a toasty glow, the four bedrooms are spacious and two are en suite.

**Details** From £2,085 per week, self-catered, for eight (01993 775540, highmountain.co.uk)

### Best for partygoers

#### 9 Lodge Danube St Anton, Austria

St Anton is Austria's prime resort for a party week, and Lodge Danube is ideal either for a smaller group or part of a larger one — Danube is one of four lodges created from an old sawmill. The decor is pared-down and sleek — lots of exposed brick, dark wood and cream and chocolate furnishings — the four en suite bedrooms come with rainforest showers, underfloor heating and sumptuous beds, while the rooftop sanarium (sauna/steam room combo) feels deliciously decadent.

**Details** From £7,840 per week, including flights and transfers, fully-catered, for eight (020 3740 7862, scottdunn.com)



### Best for two families

#### 10 Chalet Marmotte, Saint Martin de Belleville Les Trois Vallées, France

Built in 2012, Marmotte is an impressively designed chalet with a double-height lounge on the second floor, giving spectacular views. Ideal for two families, it has a separate suite with main bedroom and triple bunkroom, and two further bedrooms, all with glorious views plus an

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this season but Rendezvous is one of the best. The slightly old-fashioned house is one of only a few traditional chalets close to the main Medran lift.  
**Details** From £6,741 per week, fully-catered, for nine in five bedrooms (020 8877 8888, powderwhite.com)

### Best for foodies

#### 12 Chalet Gourmet Morzine, France

If you're a skier who thinks all the physical exercise is an excuse to eat more, Chalet Gourmet will be a delight. A hundred-year-old Savoyard farmhouse converted into a 21st-century eco-chalet, the house is coolly stylish; cow-skin rugs, leather sofas, sleek log-burners and six light, airy bedrooms. But the food is the real star: home-made preserves and freshly-baked bread at breakfast, lavish five-course dinners and bakes for post-piste afternoon tea.  
**Details** A week is from £7,139, fully-catered, for 15 (0033 450 04 39 83, gourmetski.com)

### Best for Tyrolean style

#### 13 Chalet Kitzbühel Kitzbühel, Austria

Kitzbühel is one of Austria's prettiest towns and this chalet has Tyrolean charm in spades; wooden walls lightened by crisp white drapes and mini chandeliers, a log fire and übermodern kitchen. The five bedrooms are cosy but the real bonus is the location — you can ski on to the slopes from the front door.  
**Details** From £3,175 per week, self-catered for ten (Ref 498616, homeaway.com)

### Best for la dolce vita

#### 14 Chalet Maso Doss Madonna di Campiglio, Italy

Good quality private chalets are something of a rarity in the Italian Alps, so Maso Doss is a real find — a gorgeous old farmhouse dating from the 1500s, converted into a six-bedroom chalet. The huge open fireplace, thick walls and heavy beams keep the historic feel, while the bedrooms are comfortably furnished.



It's not the last word in contemporary styling but, if you're after rustic chic with a hit of Italian style, it's a great choice.  
**Details** From £3,634 for a week self-catered for 12 (holidaylettings.co.uk, reference 684227)

### Best for views

#### 15 Chalet Alpin Roc Verbier, Switzerland

If you like your skiing interspersed with lazy afternoons sipping hot chocolate and staring at mountain vistas, Alpin Roc is the perfect choice. Perched in the Sonalou area of Verbier — high above the main village — all rooms have spectacular views, with large balconies. Cosy chintz is replaced with slick, pared-down decor in the four bedrooms and spacious, open-plan living area.  
**Details** From £5,500 per week, self-catered for eight (holidaylettings.co.uk, reference 4870928)

### Best for old-school style

#### 16 Chalet Zirma Zurs, Austria

The same families have been coming here for generations; après-ski bars groan under bottles of Moët and Chanel sunglasses are de rigueur, so cosy little Zirma is a bargain. It has two sumptuous bedrooms, with en suites in pale stone, a firelit lounge and breakfast and dinner — and your choice from the wine cellar — served by your private butler.  
**Details** From £10,332 per week, fully catered, for four (0845 618 2205, akvillas.com)

### Best for house-party hedonism

#### 17 Baita 1697 Sestriere, Italy

One of the most spectacular rental properties in the Italian Alps, Baita 1697 is an architect-designed conversion of a 17th-century building that oozes style. From the exposed-stone vaulting in the firelit lounge, to the huge dining table, this is the place for an unforgettable house party; the roof terrace, with hot tub and fire pit, completes the picture.

**Details** From £13,470, fully-catered, for ten adults and eight children, (0203 004 8750, alpineguru.com)

### Best for super skiers

#### 18 Chalet Ananda Val d'Isère, France

New to Powder White for 2014, Ananda is in the hamlet of Le Laisinant, next to a high-speed lift connecting to the spectacular Espace Killy ski area. It's a ten-minute stroll into Val's glam high street, but the wonderfully cosy lounge, with a roaring fire, is hard to leave in the evenings. The five bedrooms are dotted with antique furniture and thick, fake-fur throws, four have en suite facilities.  
**Details** From £4,667 a week, fully-catered, for 11 (020 8877 8888, powderwhite.com)

### Best for affordable glamour

#### 19 Chalet Grisonella Klosters, Switzerland

Picking a house that doesn't need a king's ransom in Klosters is tricky, so Grisonella is a find. The pretty lounge, with carved wood furniture, has a spiral staircase leading to the five bedrooms which are doll's-house cute, with views into the village. The town centre and the lifts are eight minutes' walk away.  
**Details** From £2,932 per week, self-catered, for ten (020 7351 6384, sjvillas.co.uk)

### Best for Savoyard charm

#### 20 Chalet Clearmount Méribel, France

Another new addition to Crystal, Clearmount oozes traditional Savoyard style, with a large open fire and a balcony. All six bedrooms have en suites and there is a sauna, hot-tub and fitness area. The ski-lifts are a five-minute ride away, with a regular shuttle service, to access the entire Three Valleys ski area.  
**Details** From £784pp including flights and full-board, based on 12 sharing (020 8939 0726, crystalski.co.uk)

outdoor hot-tub and lounging area.  
**Details** From £5,370 per week, fully-catered, for nine (020 7351 6384, sjvillas.co.uk)

### Best in Verbier

#### 11 Chalet Rendezvous Verbier, Switzerland

New Swiss salary laws mean far fewer companies are offering chalets in Verbier

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