

MORZINE, FRANCE

By Pat Maguire

On January 21, 2011, we will follow the sun and snow to the winter wonderland in the heart of the Portes du Soleil, Morzine, France. It is the largest town of all the “Portes du Soleil” resorts. This is our crème-de-la-crème trip next season and yes, it is **ski-in, ski-out**.

This unique ski area interconnects 12 resorts in France and Switzerland, passing from villages of Savoie to the landscapes of the Valais; **one lift ticket does it all** (no supplements for cross-border skiing and riding). Loosely translated, “Portes du Soleil” means “gateway to the sun”, and the vibrant Rhone-Alps town of Morzine is the main portal to this incredibly large ski circus. Via its state of the art modern lift and piste connection with adjacent Avoriaz, Morzine accesses **214 lifts and 435 miles of pistes linking over a dozen villages in two countries**. It just doesn’t get much grander than that! Variety is the spice of skiing and the choices are many on the slopes of the Portes du Soleil. Skiers and riders wake up in the morning to difficult choices: brioche, croissant, local cheeses, fresh sausage—or a bit of each? After breakfast, the decisions don’t grow easier. Head west and you’ll find yourself in the stylish part of the Portes du Soleil resort, **Morzine-Les Gets**; head east, and you’ll find yourself skiing across the border to the **Swiss part of the resort, Champéry, Les Crosets and Champoussin**. Take the ski lifts from the center of Morzine to the adjacent valley of **Ardent and Les Lindarets**. This section, also accessible by shuttle bus, is aptly named “Super” Morzine-Avoriaz. There, you can break for lunch at “La Chalande,” an old converted farmhouse where the cuisine is matched only by the charm of the décor. Your lunch choices on the mountain are abundant. **Frankly, it’s impossible to make a bad ski decision in Morzine**. All the Portes du Soleil resorts share the marvelous terrain. **Beginners** (30%) can stick close to the resorts and **intermediates** (30%) won’t have a problem if they stay on the trails, while both the extensive off-piste skiing and the exhausting expanse will stretch **experts** (40%). **The terrain at Portes du Soleil stretches over an area so wide that it defies simple definition**. Busy beginner slopes drape down the mountainsides on the fringes of Morzine and other nearby villages. Long boulevards wind through shaded forests as they drop thousands of vertical feet from high ridges into deep valleys. Piste markers define groomed routes down vast snowfields above the timberline. And from the mountaintops, the panorama starring the Mont Blanc massif, western Europe’s highest peak, is displayed like a rack of postcards—each a little different from the others, but all unique.

Champs Fleuris, our ski-in, ski-out hotel, is at the foot of the slopes in the village center. At the end of the day, relax in their **outdoor, heated pool** or soothe tired muscles with a massage or sauna. Of course, there is the hotel bar with music. **Après ski is exciting with many tropical bars and discos to choose from** or you may enjoy a hockey game or figure skating exhibition at the Ice Palace. There is also cross-

country skiing, dog sledding and ice climbing. Ski Morzine and discover an authentic alpine Savoyard village offering many activities for nonskiers alike: skating, hiking, shopping, guided tours of historical Morzine, guided tours with snowshoes around Morzine and sleigh rides. Morzine is close to Geneve, Annecey, Montreux, Lake Geneva and many other points of interest for day trips and activities.

Sooo, you know the drill— **early sign-up for this trip is Tuesday, July 20**. Be there, be early; bring your checkbook (\$500 first payment) and current membership. **Space is limited**. The **early sign-up price of \$2,329**, makes this holiday **yours**. The cost after August 3, is \$2,379. Mark this trip on your calendar, January 21 to January 29, 2011.

Included:

- ❖ RT flight on Lufthansa from **Philadelphia to Geneva**
- ❖ RT motor coach transfers in Europe
- ❖ **Seven nights lodging at Hotel Champs Fleuris, in Morzine, daily breakfast buffet & four course dinner**
- ❖ **5-day Portes du Soleil ski pass (France & Switzerland)**
- ❖ **Group Ski Guide**
- ❖ **Taxes and current fuel charges.**
- ❖ **Fall Line Ski Club personalized luggage tags**

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