

# Cervinia, Italy

*By Pat Maguire*

Cervinia, Italy, world-class skiing at its finest! Come ski past world-famous Monte Cervino. What, you've never heard of it? Sure you did-it's the Italian name for the Matterhorn, the magnificent rock that Italy shares with Switzerland. A dramatic peak that may be the most photographed mountain on earth. Bring your skis, your snowboard and a ravenous appetite for fun. Cervinia is among the highest resorts in the Alps with good snow/sun conditions. Cervinia boasts 5,000' of vertical and glacier skiing at its finest on the Plateau Rosa (where there is summer skiing). Huge treeless snowfields offer many miles of wide, groomed, ego-busting runs for your skiing pleasure and off-piste powder for your challenge. Skiing from Cervinia to Zermatt, Switzerland is popular, as is the return ski from Zermatt via Europe's highest cableway, the "Klein Matterhorn," at 12,533 ft. From Plateau Rosa down to the village is a five-mile journey, with a vertical drop of nearly 4,800 feet, more if you start from the Klein Matterhorn, the majestic peak that sits across the glacier from its big brother. Beginners will enjoy the Plain Maison and Cretaz area, intermediates will find Plateau Rosa, Cime Bianche & Valtournenche ideal and experts shouldn't miss shooting down the Cielo Alto and Carosello areas. The ultra modern snowboarding area is a real amusement park on the snow, accompanied by music at full volume. One of the great things about skiing here is the huge choice of mountain bars and restaurants, which you literally fall into from the trails. Need more snow time?...try heliskiing, kiteskiing, snow biking, telemark skiing or cross-country skiing.

We will be staying at the Sertorelli Sport Hotel, in Cervinia, below the splendid silhouette of the Matterhorn. Buffet breakfast is included along with an assortment of sweets prepared by their pastry chefs and for dinner, a four-course menu. Some of the hotel's amenities include restaurant, bar, internet service, billiards, spa and the new indoor pool and hot tub, with views of the Matterhorn, are guaranteed to make your tired body feel alive again after a long day on the slopes. Free, private shuttle to ski lifts provided. Equipment rentals, repairs and tune-ups are right in the hotel for your convenience. Instructors are available for lessons and guides to accompany you in the vast, magical area of Cervinia-Zermatt. For your après ski pleasure there are many places to rehydrate such as the Dragon Pub, the Yeti, Copa Pan, Lino's and that late night bad boy, The Garage.

For our history buffs, Cervinia is in the Valle d' Aoste region of Italy. Aosta is known for having some of the best Roman ruins north of Rome. A side trip is planned for the St. Orso, woodcrafters fair that has taken place annually for over 1,000 years! Aosta is at the foot of Pila, you can ski Pila in the morning and enjoy the afternoon at the fair.

To top off this outstanding European holiday, we are including 3 days/nights in Florence, home of the Renaissance and birthplace of our modern world. Florence is Europe's cultural capital, with more artistic masterpieces per square kilometer than anyplace else. In a single day, you could look Michelangelo's David in the eyes, fall under the seductive

sway of Botticelli's Birth of Venus, and climb the modern world's first dome, which still dominates the skyline. But why stop there? We will stay at the Hotel Balestri which lets you experience Florence up close. Located in the heart of Florence on the banks of the Arno River just minutes from the Ponte Vecchio and within easy walking distance of the Uffizi Gallery, the Accademia, Santa Croce, Brunelleschi's Duomo - the fourth largest cathedral in the world; and countless restaurants, shops and other cultural and tourist delights that Florence is famous for.

So come join me and turn your "To-Do's" into "TA-DA's"!

The price of the trip includes round trip air, on Lufthansa (in-flight drinks included) from Philadelphia, round trip motorcoach transfers in Europe, 7 nights accommodations at Sport Hotel Sertorelli in Cervinia, buffet breakfast and 4 course dinner daily, 3 nights Hotel Balestri in Florence, with breakfast. You'll receive those great personalized Fall Line souvenir luggage tags. Current airline taxes and service charges included.

Six day Aosta Valley Ski Pass (reduced rates for mature skiers available later) to include Cervinia, Valtournenche, Pila, Monterosa, Courmayeur, La Thuile, the French runs at La Rosiere, Alagna and entrance to a host of non-skiing attractions. Zermatt requires additional supplement.

Space is limited to 36 lucky members when this trip opens for early sign-up on Tuesday, July 21, 2009. Be there, be early and have your membership current. Please bring a copy of your PASSPORT with you. The early sign up price at the July 21 and August 4<sup>th</sup> meetings is \$2269. per person, double occupancy. Contact trip leader for additional room options. After August 4<sup>th</sup>, the price increases by \$50.

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