ENGLISH WINTER 2026-27

# CHÂTEL PRESS PACK

CHÂTEL
Portes du Soleil





# CHÂTEL, INTENSE NATURE


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# 2026-2027 DIARY DATES

**SATURDAY 19TH DECEMBER 2026 TO SUNDAY 3RD JANUARY 2027**

## FAIRYTALE CHRISTMAS AND NEW YEAR

Christmas in the mountains is marked with special events; arrival of Father Christmas distributing treats, torchlit descents to delight all ages, New Years eve parties in the great outdoors with a DJ and fireworks display, and a new year like no other...

**SATURDAY 23RD JANUARY 2027**

## 4TH UCI SNOWBIKE WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS

Saturday 23rd January, at Linga starting with the Super-G followed by the dual slalom. Participants require a UCI affiliated National Federation licence to participate.

Every winter, since the first edition in 2024, this colourful event continues to make history.

We should once again see Vincent Tupin, Pierre Thévenard (locals), Cédric Gracia and Léo Grisel in the men's events and Lisa Baumann, Vicky Clavel, Zoé Fayolle and Morgane Such in the ladies' events. All of them have won a podium position in previous editions.





## TUESDAY 9TH FEBRUARY 2027

### MARDI GRAS

A carnaval parade through the village streets by Châtel infant and primary school children dressed in themed costumes of their own creation!

## TUESDAY 23RD FEBRUARY 2027

### AGRICULTURAL FAIR

Agriculture remains a vital part of life in Châtel, home to over 20 working farms. On this special day, parents and children are invited to the resort's new cultural centre for a festive evening of total immersion in this tradition passed down through the generations. The varied programme has something for everyone, including a bell-ringing parade, a commentated cowbell exhibition, displays of vintage and modern farm equipment, activities for children, and audiovisual presentations on mountain farming life. Visitors can sample and buy local farm produce, take part in judging the "Best Abondance Cheese" competition, enjoy traditional wooden games and live music, and join in the prize-giving ceremony.

## TUESDAY 9TH FEBRUARY

### BLESSING FOR SKIERS AND MOUNTAIN RESCUERS

For the 8th year, skiers, walkers and mountain rescue teams are welcomed to the Notre-Dame chapel in Plaine Dranse for a special blessing service.

Senior representatives from the High Mountain Gendarmerie Unit (PGHM), the Fire Service and their Mountain Rescue Group, the resort's Ski Patrol, Mountain Rescue services, Civil Protection, and helicopter companies gather beneath the chapel's vaulted ceiling.
Skiers return to the resort in a guided torchlit descent and pedestrians can take the Pierre Longue chairlift.

## SUNDAY 14TH TO SUNDAY 21ST MARCH 2027

### ROCK THE PISTES FESTIVAL – PORTES DU SOLEIL

The Portes du Soleil, once again hosts ephemeral concert stages for this music festival. Fans can enjoy French and international pop-rock concerts from 13h30, ensuring they can return home on the lift network. The Châtel concert is at Plaine Dranse.

## SUNDAY 14TH TO FRIDAY 19TH MARCH 2027

### CHÂTEL BANDS CAMP

The music continues for après ski in the resort with concerts in the village performed by new and upcoming artists, and... of course, any musical members of the public wishing to join are very welcome on stage. A great atmosphere guaranteed!





# FAMILY

Families have always been a priority in Châtel. The village has retained its traditional values whilst developing into a popular resort: its unique character, sense of welcome, plethora events and leisure activities, gastronomy and local traditions enable both children and adults to slow down and recharge their batteries in the mountains.



The weekly activity programme has **sixty events and leisure activities**. There is an orientation course in the village, an ice rink, the Forme d'O water activity park, spas, The Old Customs house (a mountain contraband information centre), heritage visits, the Châtel Indoor Kids Park and ZoéTim Kid'Aventure (large indoor play areas for children from 2 – 12 yrs for the first and from 1 – 12 yrs for the second), a carousel for little children, Abondance cheese-making explanations, library, Belalp escape game, cinema, age-specific children's workshops and children's shows during the school holidays, sledging areas, mountain biking on snow, sled-dog activities, snowshoe outings (guided or not), concerts, sewing workshops, street entertainers...

## "THE MYSTERIES OF LAKE VONNES"

### TREASURE HUNT FOR CHILDREN FROM AGE 6

Following the success of its indoor smuggling-themed escape game and the popular outdoor «Émile's Treasure» trail for children aged 10 and over, the Belalp hotel is proud to present a brand-new family treasure hunt for children from age 6: "The Mysteries of Lake Vonnes".



# "FLOCON VERT" LABEL

## This accreditation supports mountain areas in their environmental transition.

It was developed by the Mountain Riders association to give mountain holiday enthusiasts a clear indication of how committed each tourist destination is to environmental transition, awarding three snowflake levels: 1, 2 or 3.

Destinations are accredited depending on their level of engagement in environmental and social initiatives.

In this way, by choosing a "Flocon Vert" (Green Snowflacke) resort as your holiday destination, you know you are supporting responsible tourism.

Châtel was the 3rd resort in France to obtain Green Snowflake accreditation in 2015. It was renewed in both 2020 and 2026 each time retaining 2 snowflakes. In this way the destination in encouraged to continue to engage in actions to preserve the environment, vital to everyone's wellbeing with the ultimate aim of achieving exemplary status.

Resorts are reassessed every 3 years as this is an engagement over the long term. The list of qualifying requirements is revised every 5 years. There are certain points that the resort adheres to precisely and others which are naturally addressed given the village's history in becoming a resort – a history whose founding principles remain preserved.

Among these various points, agriculture and tourism perfectly illustrate this approach.

### THE LEVELS ARE:

**1st snowflake**: committed destination

**2nd snowflake**: working towards excellence

**3rd snowflake**: exemplary

## AGRICULTURE AND TOURISM

During the winter, farmers and their herds of cattle remain in their village farms until going up to the summer pastures in the spring. Despite the shortened hours of daylight, the work remains intense: milking twice a day (morning and evening), making and fermenting the cheese, pressing the cheese and the daily wiping of the cheese wheels already maturing in the cellars - for a minimum of 100 days. The cattle must also be cared for; fed and watered. A typical day begins at 6am and finishes around 8pm, all in addition to spending time with the family and selling cheese from the farm.

**Abondance cheese (AOP)**, which the farmers make, is very versatile. One delicious dish made from the cheese is Berthoud, STG (Guaranteed traditional speciality).

**Berthoud** is eaten with local charcuterie, potatoes and green salad making a satisfying meal. It is on the menu at numerous restaurants and hotel-restaurants in the village, ski area and along the walking or snow-shoe tracks.

Farming, traditionally an important activity in Châtel and the Abondance valley (with the Pays d'Art et d'Histoire label), is also important for tourism. Its values, traditions, know-how and gastronomy, all have an important place in local tourism, which has been sympathetically developed on a human scale. The sense of welcome remains intact.



## GOOD TO KNOW

The Cave d'Azélie, in the village centre, shares the secrets of Abondance cheese-making. Every Thursday morning from 9am to 10am they offer a visit to their maturing cellars followed by an Abondance cheese tasting.

**Reservation required at Châtel Tourisme until Wednesday at 6pm. Price: €3,00.**





# "PAYS D'ART ET D'HISTOIRE" LABEL

The "Pays d'art et d'histoire" (Art et History Town) label recognises territories which, aware of the challenges presented by the appropriation of their architecture and heritage by their inhabitants, engage actively to educate, conserve, mediate and support architectural quality and the quality of the environment.

The implementation of the label relies on a partnership between the State and local authorities, formalised, once the label is awarded, by the signing of an agreement, renegotiable every ten years.

## ACQUIRING THE LABEL

In 2003, the Abondance valley obtained the "Pays d'art et d'histoire" label.

In August 2019 an extension of the label was validated to cover all the communes in the Evian-vallée d'Abondance area.

The promotion of local heritage preserved for the public to enjoy is due to the work of local guides and experts.



### IN CHÂTEL, VARIOUS SITES ARE RECOGNISED IN THE ACCREDITATION:

- **The Old Customs House**, mountain contraband information centre. The centre can be visited with or without a guide. The guides, from the cultural service of Châtel town hall, provide commentary and information. There are also family and children's games, role-play, and group activities... The temporary exhibition entitled «Everything to declare!... in the customs office at the smuggling and contraband museum...».



- **The Villapeyron sawmill**, built in the 20s.
- **Oratories**, 20 in total.
- **The Plaine Dranse chapel**, in the heart of the mountain pastures in summer and surrounded by snow in winter.
- **The neo-gothic Saint-Laurent church** built in 1908.
- **Traditional mountain chalets** of typical regional farm architecture built of stone and wood with two sloping roof panels and carved wooden balconies, some of which are over 100 years old.





- **The Essert chapel**, built in 1784 to commemorate the lives spared in the hamlet following a terrible landslide.
- **The Vonnes chapel**, located on the Pas de Morgins road since 1630, very modest when built but enlarged in 1886.

## READING

Eric Dresco's book: *Châtel, à chaque pas une histoire*, following his two-part book: *Châtel, sur les pas des pionniers...*



# SKI AREA

The "Châtel Espace Liberté" ski area includes 56 ski lifts and 69 slopes, prepared daily by piste professionals, ensuring visitors can ski with confidence and pleasure. Châtel has different activities and modules in each of its sectors: Super Châtel - Barbossine and Linga - Pré la Joux - Plaine Dranse.

## SUPER CHÂTEL – BARBOSSINE SECTOR

- **Snowpark "Smooth Park"** for beginners to experts.
- **Green piste - Flocon Vert** (with a mountain flora and fauna theme including figurines and information boards).
- **Speed track** with timing system and a fun **boardercross** at Chalet Neuf.

## LINGA - PRÉ LA JOUX – PLAINE DRANSE SECTOR

- **The 'Great White' version of the Fantasticable** at Pré la Joux (at the top of Rochassons chairlift).
- **Belette information Piste** (explaining the history of Abondance cheese-making from its origins in the 12th century).
- **New snow activities**: supervised by professionals, fans of snakegliss, airboard, yooner and snowracer will love this final run before the Pierre Longue closes for the day.



## CHÂTEL SKI AREA OPENING AND CLOSING DATES

**SATURDAY 5TH AND SUNDAY 6TH DECEMBER 2026**
Pré la Joux sector opens.

**SATURDAY 12TH TO FRIDAY 18TH DECEMBER 2026**
Part opening of the Linga/ Pré la Joux sectors and the link to the Portes du Soleil (Avoriaz).

**SATURDAY 19TH DECEMBER 2026**
Full ski area open.

**SUNDAY 18TH APRIL 2027**
Resort close date.

## THE 12 PORTES DU SOLEIL RESORTS

### IN FRANCE

- Châtel
- La Chapelle d'Abondance
- Abondance in Vallée d'Abondance
- Avoriaz
- Morzine
- Montriond
- Saint-Jean-d'Aulps
- Les Gets in Vallée d'Aulps

### IN SWITZERLAND

- Morgins
- Torgon
- Champoussin-Les Crosets
- Champéry






## SKI PASS PRICES SAMPLES

### CHÂTEL ESPACE LIBERTÉ (AT TICKET OFFICE)

1-day adult ..... €58

6-day adult ..... €306

### PORTES DU SOLEIL (AT TICKET OFFICE)

1-day adult ..... €73

6-day adult ..... €373

**INFOS: WWW.CHATEL.COM**



# RANDO PARC

Like hiking enthusiasts in summer, who take to the trails as soon as the snow has melted, ski-tourers wait impatiently for the first quality mantel of snow, and head off on seal skins to explore the village, Abondance valley, neighbouring Switzerland, and wider region. And there is plenty to discover...

For some, the discipline is second nature, for others wanting to try this new activity (an alternative to snowshoes), it is a challenging skill to learn.

For them, there are 5 defined circuits of varying difficulty, close to the ski area, where beginners can learn and perfect this new technique.

## SUPER CHÂTEL – BARBOSSINE SECTOR

### THE FRANCO-SUISSE (EASY)

**Start** Super Châtel (bubble arrival).

### BARBOSSINE (FAIRLY DIFFICULT)

**Start** Barbossine (arrival of Petit Châtel chairlift).

### MORCLAN (FAIRLY DIFFICULT)

**Start** Super Châtel (bubble arrival).

## PRÉ LA JOUX – PLAINE DRANSE SECTOR

### HAPPY VALLEY (EASY)

**Start** Pré la Joux
(finish at the chairlift of the same name).

### LA SERPENTINE (FAIRLY DIFFICULT)

**Start** Pré la Joux
(on the right of the piste groomers garage).

**RANDO PARK SINGLE RIDE PASS: €9.70**



# LET THE MOUNTAIN WIN YOU OVER!

## SPECIAL OFFERS

### EXAMPLE PRICE OF A ONE-WEEK, ALL-INCLUSIVE HOLIDAY IN FEBRUARY

One week stay in an apartment for a family of 2 adults and 2 children (-12yrs) with 4x6-day Châtel Liberté ski passes (valid on 120 km of pistes), ski equipment rental for 4 people and half-day ski lessons for the children for the week.

Based on 4 people sharing a 2-room apartment, from 6th to 13th February 2027.
*From* ..... €2,675

### THE MARSIEN PASS

#### THE ULTIMATE DEAL FOR YOUR MARCH/APRIL GETAWAY!

Châtel has joined the national "Pass Marsien" scheme, a spring skiing offer packed with benefits to help you make the most of March and April, from 6th March 2027.

After the school holidays, skiing conditions remain perfect, the weather turns milder, the spring sunshine graces the slopes, the days grow longer, and après-ski is a time to be cherished!

### ALL-INCLUSIVE PACKAGES

7 nights in an apartment
+ 6-day Châtel Espace Liberté ski pass:
*From* ..... €325 per adult*

** Indicative price per person, per week, based on 4 people sharing a privately rented studio apartment from 20th March 2027 to 17th April 2027.*

### LOW-COST SKI ESCAPE – WEEKEND SKI BREAK IN CHÂTEL

*From* ..... €74/person*

** Based on 4 people sharing a 4-bed studio apartment from 27th March 2027 to 17th April 2027.*

### ROCK THE PISTES FROM 14TH TO 20TH MARCH 2027 – MUSIC FESTIVAL BREAK

7 nights in an apartment + 6-day Portes du Soleil ski pass (gives access to all concerts):
*From* ..... €415 per adult*

** Indicative price per person, per week, based on 4 people sharing a privately rented studio apartment from 13th to 20th March 2027.*

**INFOS: WWW.CHATELRESERVATION.COM**



### KIDS SKI FOR FREE AT EASTER!

One free -12 ski pass with each adult ski pass bought for an identical duration.

From 20th March 2027, for Châtel Espace Liberté ski passes or Portes du Soleil 3 days + ski passes, paid for at the same time as accommodation.

# CHATEL STATISTICS

**1247**
full time residents

**25 598**
tourist beds

**17**
hotels
1****, 10***, 5**,
1 no-starred hotel.

**7**
group holiday centres

**1**
camping/winter caravan site
****

**6**
holiday rental complexes
1 holiday rental complexes with hotel facilities ***, 3 holiday rental complexes**** and 2 ***.

**Other**
accommodation
1 holiday and stopover gite,
2 chambres d'hôtes/B&Bs,
1 youth hotel, 1 holiday village.

**41**
restaurants
including hotel restaurants.

**All**
shop

# CHÂTEL ESPACE LIBERTÉ SKI AREA



**69 pistes**
120 km of ski runs
14 green runs, 27 blue runs,
22 red runs, 5 black runs,
1 freeride itinary.



**56**
ski lifts
2 bubble lifts, 19 chair lifts,
32 drag lifts, 3 carpets
for beginners.



**70,609**
people
Hourly flow.



**1,100 to 2,200 m**
altitude
minimum and maximum.



**1,000 m**
maximum
elevation gain



**Facilities**
382 snow cannons,
20 piste groomers, 53 piste
maintenance/first aiders,
2 Kindergartens, 1 Snowpark,
1 Funpark, 2 Boarder.

# DOMAINE SKIABLE DES PORTES DU SOLEIL



**307 pistes**
600 km of ski runs
33 black runs, 105 red runs,
130 blue runs, 39 green runs.



**208**
ski lifts
3 cable cars, 9 bubble lifts,
79 chair lifts, 95 drag lifts,
22 rope tows and carpets.



**266,717**
people
Hourly flow.



**900 to 2,400 m**
altitude
minimum and maximum.



**Facilities**
10 snowparks, 2 half-pipes,
10 boardercross, 100 piste groomers,
1,300 snow cannons, 174 piste
maintenance/first aiders.

CHÂTEL

Portes du Soleil


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