

THE SPEAR'S 500

TRAVEL GUIDE 2018



The indispensable guide to the very best luxury hotels, resorts, holiday rentals,
and tour operators in the world, including aviation and yachts

SPEAR'S

TOP FIVE SKI CHALETs



L'Apogee Courchevel, France

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A collaboration between acclaimed designers India Mahdavi and Joseph Dirand and a member of the prestigious Oetker Collection, L'Apogée Courchevel opened for its first winter season in 2014. Located in Courchevel's Jardin Alpin, at the very top of its former Olympic ski jump, this ski-in-ski-out hotel boasts 55 rooms, arranged into suites emulating the design of a private chalet. Combining the intimacy and comfort of a private apartment with the services of a five-star hotel (including Koori, the hotel's signature Japanese restaurant and soothing Sisley Spa with mosaic pool), chalets L'Amarante and L'Alpensia offer 'palatial comfort' and luxury, total privacy and access with a private ski lift, in-chalet spa, private butler, chef and home cinema. The chalets are set apart from the main hotel, but only a few steps away from L'Apogée's restaurants, pool and leisure facilities. The hotel's four-bedroom penthouse covers the entire top floor, should you opt to stay there, while its luxurious suites offer spectacular views from their underfloor-heated balconies. Deep soaking tubs and steam showers provide the perfect place to unwind after a day on the slopes. In the centre of the hotel, surrounded by a wine cellar displaying jeroboams, sits a marble counter topped with the two glass candle holders created for the Barcelona 1992 Olympics. Food comes courtesy of executive chef Jean-Luc Lefrançois and pastry chef Eve Moncorger who present a menu embellished with extraordinary creations, in particular 'The Koori Carpaccio' or 'black cod in miso sauce', along with a selection of sushi and other Japanese specialties. L'Apogée Courchevel opened for its first winter season in 2014. Rates start at €900 per room per night on a half board basis.

Chalet Husky Val-d'Isère, France

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Sleeping up to 14 across seven en-suite bedrooms, Chalet Husky boasts unusual designs and a state-of-the-art games room, a gym, climbing wall and archery and rifle ranges and a slick wellness area complete with a 'vast' pool and 'infinity waterfall', sauna, Jacuzzi, hammam and massage rooms — complete with 'automatic massage tables', meaning 'there's no excuse for aching muscles, not to mention the fitness room for those needing that extra bit of a workout,' they assert. Guests are provided with a ski host, chef and in-resort driver during their stay and are blessed with peerless views of the village over meals and sipping aperitifs from the in-house bar, while the ever obliging staff at Chalet Husky offer a range of catering options, which can be mulled over at leisure after dinner. 'From the minute you enter the chalet, prepare to be wowed on every level,' promise Ultimate Luxury Chalets, who are quick to point to the 'vast' open-plan living space that spans the length of the chalet, from the dining area and bar area at one end, over the glass walkway suspended above the indoor atrium garden, to the lounge area, flanked with 'vast' brown leather sofas in front of a large open fireplace. The 'quirky and interesting artefacts and objets d'art' won't be to everyone's taste — but the lighting in the chalet 'adds an extra dimension, from the coloured uplighting in the atrium to the full spectrum of rainbow colours above the pool', if that's your thing. 'Chalet Husky is simply unlike any other chalet you have ever seen before... the most mind-blowing property which you simply won't want to leave.'

Chalet N Oberlech, Austria

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One of the world's most exclusive ski escapes (you might expect no less for up to £385,000 per week), Chalet N truly takes alpine luxury to new heights. Set on the slopes of the Arlberg resort of Oberlech and with skiing right to the door (it also has its own lift to the piste), its 11 lavish suites (sleeping up to 22 guests) come kitted out with exquisite bed linens, down and feather mattresses and a stylish bathroom adorned with full-size Hermès shower and bath products (children are just as pampered, with products from Bulgari kids) and walk-in closets. Each suite also boasts a private balcony with splendid views of Lech and Oberlech, and features spacious bedrooms and luxurious living areas with dressing rooms. The fireplace master suite is outstanding, while children will delight in their own bunk bed suite, sleeping up to four. Chalet N also boasts two dining rooms, a terrace, library, private cinema, games room, wine cellar, 3D TVs and a team of 24-hour staff including private chefs, a personal butler, chauffeur and concierge (not to mention the limousine and helicopter service). Best of all perhaps is its gorgeous swimming pool and outdoor whirlpool, hay sauna, Finnish Sauna, Hammam, ice cave steam room, treatment rooms, relaxation area and gym, and in-house therapists. The wellness area also features its own cosmetic area, a double treatment room with double or single massage beds, a private hair stylist, relaxation area, steam showers, ice fountain, salt gallery steam bath and cold basins. The modern fitness areas are equally well-equipped, and the Health Club offers a wide choice of the latest fitness equipment and regimens including resistance training, cardiovascular and free weights.



Chalet Pelerin

Le Miroir, France

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Nestled in the tiny French village of Le Miroir, Chalet Pelerin offers guests both the intimacy of an authentic French village and access to one of Europe's most breathtaking landscapes. Many will no doubt choose to head straight for the pistes, while the more adventurous might want to sign up for heli-skiing or snowshoeing to the private off-piste l'alpage for a candlelit fondue dinner. Although, with an indoor saltwater pool, Finnish sauna, steam room, outdoor hot tub, a full team of chalet staff at your disposal and high-tech interiors that 'bring the outdoors in', you might find it difficult to set foot outside. Managed by premium travel experts Eleven (whose aim is to 'quench a thirst for unprecedented adventures, authentic connections with down-to-earth guides and deeply personalised vacation plans for the Adventure Capitalist', by the way) and available for exclusive use only throughout summer and winter, Chalet Pelerin styles itself as a home from home — one with personal ski guides (including heli-skiing locals) and a private chef (who cooks from his own garden, of course). 'When we discovered the potential of Chalet Pelerin, we knew we were on to something with all the makings of our "turn it up to 11" mission,' they claim. 'The recipe? A powerful place in a hidden corner of the world, a safe haven from modern life, and here at Chalet Pelerin, the unforgettable Tarentaise Valley. When you arrive to the mountain village of Le Miroir, 180-degree, is-this-for-real views and a glass of bubbly are on tap. Drinks by the fire, a dip in the saltwater pool framed by the Alps, source-to-fork cuisine. It's all here. And then some.'

Chalet Skyfall

Lech, Austria

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Chalet Skyfall, located in Austria's Arlberg mountain range just below the Valluga peak, made waves when it was completed in 2014: it was the first new chalet to be built in the St. Christoph resort in 50 years. It might be new-build, but its proprietors were hardly looking to make a quick euro. The flexible, four-apartment complex (two of the apartments can be combined to accommodate groups of up to 21 people across six floors) belongs to the nearby five-star Hospiz Hotel, owned by Florian Wener, whose family have been leaders in the local hospitality business stretching back five decades. While its façade was built with tradition firmly in mind, the interiors showcase a 'novel, modern mix' of contemporary art, furniture and lighting fused with a mature, rustic appeal. It aimed to offer something a little different to the standard, classic 'antler chandeliers and cowbells' chalet aesthetic, and that attitude filters through in every detail. The spacious penthouse remains particularly covetable: with sleeping room for 11 guests across five separate bedrooms (each with their own bathroom), it also comes with a 140 square metre terrace, balcony, room for 12 at dinner, a separate kitchen, Apple TV and surround sound in hidden speakers, its own sauna and steam room, a cinema room and playroom, wood-burning fireplace, private laundry and ski locker. On being tempted away from the slick indoor offering, guests can look forward to some of the best skiing Austria has to offer — St. Christoph is the training base of the national ski team. This is also the only resort in the country that offers heli-skiing. Bond would approve.

Chalet Pelerin
Le Miroir, France



'With an indoor saltwater pool and Finnish sauna, you may find it hard to set foot outside'

Chalet Pelerin
Le Miroir, France