



Ski trip additional information

Travel

Coach

Your travel arrangements are an important part of your tour, and it is our belief that you should **travel in comfort and safety**. An executive coach is typically provided for door-to-door travel throughout the tour. Your coach will usually be equipped with seatbelts, reclining seats, DVD, stereo, air circulation system, microphone, toilet and drinks machine. Various coach sizes and capacities are available. Tour drivers are an important part of the tour, so you should find your drivers to be friendly, experienced and reliable. Where coach travel is provided by suppliers in overseas countries, we contract reputable local companies to handle all the necessary journeys as stipulated, but while they comply with local regulations, please bear in mind that these may be different to those here in the UK.

Ferry

We use **the ferry services** from Dover to Calais for most of our tour groups travelling to Europe. With refurbished and improved vessels, you can eat and drink on board in comfort as you sail across to the Continent. We also use the fast and popular **Eurotunnel service** from Folkestone to Calais. A supplement is sometimes required for groups wishing to use this service.

Flights

For **flight-inclusive packages**, we will always take into consideration your preferred departure airport and travel times, however we cannot always guarantee these as many bookings are accepted in advance of airline schedules and route confirmations being released. Please also bear in mind that there may be very little flexibility in booking seats with a number of these airlines. As such, any requests for passenger name changes after a booking has been received may well be subject to substantial amendment fees as imposed by the airlines and such conditions are outside of our control. Our packages do not typically include the carriage of additional ski equipment which would need to be booked separately at a supplement.

Accommodation

We offer a varied selection of accommodations, all of which have been visited by our staff, agents or representatives and checked for their suitability for our groups. Most bedrooms are en-suite although some units may have shared washroom or toilet facilities. As local **accommodation classifications vary** in different countries, please read the descriptions carefully or ask us for further details before deciding whether a particular destination is right for you and your group.

Meal plans

Different meal plans are available, so please check your Tour proposal for details of the meals that have been included in your package. These may be referred to as **room only/self-catering** (no meals included); **bed and breakfast** (only breakfast included); **half board** (breakfast and dinner included) or **full board** (breakfast, packed lunch and dinner included). Meals will be provided at your accommodation unless otherwise advised (but sometimes might be at a local restaurant for example).

Damage Deposits

Some accommodation providers require a **damage deposit** to be paid in advance or directly on arrival, refundable after the stay subject to an inspection of your rooms.

Tourist tax & City tax

Some accommodation providers are required to charge a city tax or tourist tax which may have to be paid directly on arrival. Whenever possible we include these costs within your package (but please check on your Inclusions for details or check with us first if you are unsure).



Ski trip Information

Ski Tuition

We only work with established and reputable Ski Schools in our resorts. Occasionally qualified British ski instructors are also contracted. All instructors used for school groups will be qualified according to local and national regulations (where they exist), be at or over the equivalent of BASI Alpine level 2 Instructor and approved by the Director of the local snow sport school. Occasionally external or British qualified instructors will be used.

Our standard ski trip packages include 4 (or sometimes 5) hours tuition on each of 5 or 6 days unless otherwise stated on your Proposal and Confirmation. Lessons are provided on the basis of 1 instructor to every 12 pupils with locally approved qualified ski school instructors with a knowledge of the local area. Staff places and/or concessions do not count towards the instructor/pupil ratios. If agreed with the instructors you may, at your own discretion, request to vary the group sizes within your party, to take account of any uneven split of ages and abilities. Extra instructors may be available at a supplementary charge on request. Each 2-hour instruction time allocation may be marginally less as local instructors may require time to transfer to another group, in accordance with local regulations. Our arrangements do not oblige our ski instructors to remain with your group during the lunch break although they may on occasion choose to do so. **School teachers must remain 'in loco parentis' at all times.** An extra hour of instruction (i.e. 5 hours instruction per day) can be organised at a supplement in many of our resorts on request, so please ask for a quotation if this is not already itemised on your Proposal. Occasionally, instruction may be in 2.5 hour or even 3-hour blocks subject to the availability of ski school instructors.

Stay on piste

It is a condition of booking that as party leader, you agree that your pupils will ski or snowboard only on **marked and patrolled pistes** and be supervised at all times while skiing either by your party's teachers, providing they are competent skiers, or by the appointed ski instructors contracted by us on your behalf. If school staff do not accompany the lessons, they must be accessible on the phone and within easy reach, in case of an emergency or accident.

Ski Equipment

We only work with established and reputable ski hire shops and equipment providers. Each supplier has a written agreement with us that specifies the minimum safety and quality standards that we expect for our clients. Our standard ski trip packages **include the hire of skis and boots** for 5 (o 6) days, unless otherwise stated in your Proposal and Confirmation. As party leader you accept responsibility for ensuring that all your party is present at the appointed time for the safe fitting and collection of equipment and for the return of the same when appropriate and advised to do so. The condition of equipment should be checked prior to acceptance and again on return and any damages settled with the supplier direct if required.

Lost or damaged goods may be covered under **insurance**, subject to the terms and conditions of the policy. Equipment, including details of sizes required must be ordered in advance to guarantee availability in resort. Those individuals requiring sizes larger than boot size 11 may wish to give consideration to bringing their own ski boots as the stock of bigger sizes is always extremely limited.

Helmets

For a number of years there has been considerable debate on the subject of whether helmets should be worn for all snowsports (alpine skiing, snow-boarding, snow-blading). Until now, the same authorities have required only those that use snowboards or blades, or where the law of the country so dictates, to wear helmets. Currently, young people under the age of 14 must wear helmets in Italy and in many parts of Austria. The Federation Internationale de Ski (FIS) now strongly recommends that all skiers and snowboarders, regardless of ability and age, use helmets. The AfPE (Association for Physical Education) has also advised its members that helmets should be worn. The majority of the members of the Snowsports England Schools and Youth Committee voted to recommend to the governing body that the wearing of helmets should be recommended. **As such, our policy is now to include the hire of helmets in all our packages as standard.** These will be fit for purpose and correctly fitted by specialist suppliers in resort.



Ski Passes

Many ski lift companies now require a **list of all pupils' names and dates of birth on school headed paper**, to be prepared in advance and brought with you as party leader, if not supplied in advance. Individual photos may also be required. The ski areas covered by lift passes as advised and advertised by us may occasionally be subject to change. Any such change resulting from amendments made by local lift companies or resort authorities is strictly outside our control and we can accept no responsibility for any reduction in ski area caused by any such amendment or decision.

Snow Conditions

We cannot accept responsibility for **snow or weather conditions** which may affect skiing, boarding, skating or other such activities during your trip. Should bad weather and local conditions dictate that your ski and/or other contracted activities not be possible, then we will attempt to organise for transfers within the region to accommodate you, subject to regional limitations. However, we cannot guarantee that this will be possible. You may be covered for piste closure and/or any additional costs that may be incurred by your insurance, subject to the terms and conditions of your policy. The decision of the ski school or instructors on the suitability of snow conditions is final and we accept no responsibility for your party whatsoever for any action taken by you, which is not wholly in accordance with these conditions.

Ski Reps

A rep is included as part of your package and someone will be allocated to your group. While the precise role of the rep will vary from one destination to another, he or she will provide hands-on assistance with the organisation of your accommodation, ski and après ski arrangements. The ski rep may travel out with you from the UK or meet with you on arrival in resort. The rep cannot act as a member of your staff or assume any 'loco parentis' responsibility for your students but will hopefully become an invaluable member of the support team during your stay. All reps, recruited by us or our local agents, are appointed for their suitability in working with school groups. All English reps are **DBS checked** in advance.

Après Ski

Après ski, including but not limited to, swimming, ice-skating, pizza night, bowling and other events or activities that you may wish to take part in during your trip, can often be organised in advance, or pre-booked to ensure availability. However, even if these are paid for by us on your behalf or recommended by us, please bear in mind that they are provided by **external independent** suppliers and not by us. They do not form part of your package and as such, any participation in these is entirely at your own risk. We can help with any Risk Assessment that you need to undertake if requested and we would advise you to do so well in advance in order to make an informed decision. Certain **in-house après-ski activities** such as quiz nights, treasure hunts and discos are often included in your package at no additional charge and can be organised with your rep. Please refer to our Destination Guide for details of options, prices and risk assessment considerations prior to booking any activities.

Inspection trips

We strongly recommend that you undertake an **inspection visit** in advance of your trip in order to satisfy these requirements, complete your own risk assessment documentation and to benefit from local orientation in resort. We are happy to organise an inspection trip for you which will include two free nights' accommodation in the destination where you have booked (or are intending to book) on a half board basis inclusive of two free days ski lift pass and equipment hire for you as Group Leader. The cost of flights, transfers, personal expenditure and the costs for any additional members of staff will be at your own expense. If you have not already booked your ski trip with us but are hoping to do so, then we are happy to facilitate the organisation of an inspection trip as shown above, although you would need to pay for this yourself. However, the costs would be reimbursed to you by way of a discount on your invoice, as and when you book the trip with us.

Staff family concessions

Discounted places for the Group Leader's spouse and children may be available on request. Please ask us for details.

Snowsport Course Organiser (SCO) Award

As the national governing body for skiing in England, **Snowsport England** recommends that all adults accompanying young people on ski trips should have attended an **SCO**. Please ask us for details of upcoming courses. The SCO Award does not qualify staff to supervise skiing. All staff wishing to consider supervision of skiing are very strongly advised to attend the Alpine Ski Course Leader Course and gain the **ASCL Award**. Please ask us for further details or visit <http://www.uksnowsports.co.uk> for forthcoming courses and costs.



Staying Safe & Behaviour

Adults and children alike must take reasonable care for their own safety at all times. Being in a foreign environment on a trip can be very exciting, but any tour brings with it certain risks which you should attempt to minimise. Furthermore, in confirming the tour booking you are also agreeing to our terms and conditions with reference to the conduct of your group, including but not limited to damages and behaviour.

Group leaders should make pupils aware of particular slip, trip and fall hazards including warnings concerning slippery footpaths, walking in ski boots, traffic risks when disembarking from coaches and ski buses (especially when carrying skis or snowboards), falling icicles and freezing temperatures. Particular risks concerning après-ski activities such as ice-skating, tubing and tobogganing should also be fully assessed in advance. It must be remembered - and made absolutely clear to parents - that skiing has inherent risks, that falls will happen, and that people can get hurt through no fault of their own or anyone else. As well as the importance of the right equipment and clothing, you should read and adhere to the **FIS Ski-way Code**, to ensure that skiers and boarders are in control and that their speed is limited to their ability and the situation.

FIS Ski-way Code

The International Ski Federation (FIS) operates the following **safety conduct code** applicable to all skiers or snowboarders, which is binding by law:

- 1) Respect for Others: Behave in such a way that does not endanger or prejudice other skiers or snowboarders.
- 2) Control of Speed: Adapt your speed to your ability, the prevailing conditions of terrain, and the density of traffic.
- 3) Choice of Route: Choose your route in such a way that you do not endanger other skiers or snowboarders ahead.
- 4) Overtaking: You may overtake to the left or right but leave enough space for others to continue their line.
- 5) Entering and Starting: Check up and down the slopes before starting off so not to endanger yourself or others.
- 6) Stopping on the Piste: Avoid stopping on the piste in narrow places or where visibility is restricted.
- 7) Climbing on Foot: When either climbing or descending on foot, keep to the side of the piste.
- 8) Respect for Signs: A skier or snowboarder must respect all signs and markings.
- 9) Assistance: At accidents, every skier or snowboarder is duty bound to assist.
- 10) Identification: Whether involved or a witness, you must identify yourself to others following an accident.

Other Important Information

Please carefully read all the documents which we send to you by email, as they include important information which will help you in the planning and organisation of your trip. A Destination Guide is available for the resort and accommodation of your choice with further details on the resort, ski domain, risk assessment pointers, après-ski options and more. Furthermore, a selection of generic policy documents, safety guidelines, FIS Code of Conduct on the slopes and FCDO Travel Advice links are all available from our website.

Please visit: www.absolutetravel.co.uk/info-zone/planning-your-trip

Waivers

We will advise groups in advance where the signature of a waiver by a Group Leader or parent may be required in resort or prior to travel. This is sometimes required in ski resorts in the USA for example. Notwithstanding the above, Group Leaders have the reassurance that the primary contract is with Absolute Travel and Tours Limited and is signed under English law. This means that the protection offered under the Package Travel Regulations takes precedence over local disclaimers that may be demanded in resort.



Ski trip 'what to pack' checklist:

Here's a sample checklist below although you may wish to amend or use your own of course. Please also seek advice from a specialist ski apparel supplier for guidance on the purchase and hire of skiwear, clothing and recommended accessories. Consider carefully before deciding whether to bring valuable items such as jewellery or gadgets which might get damaged, lost or stolen during the trip.

Ski Clothing

- Ski jacket (which may be hired in advance)
- Ski trousers or salopettes
- Fleece
- Waterproof ski gloves
- Thermal underwear/leggings
- Thermal tops (best to wear layers)
- Ski goggles (or good quality sunglasses with unbreakable glass)
- Pairs of ski socks

Other Clothing

- Woolly hat
- Sturdy boots
- Warm coat
- Shirts
- Underwear (including normal socks)
- Trousers/Jeans/Jogging bottoms
- Hoodie or sweatshirt
- Swimming trunks/costume
- Slippers/indoor shoes

Personal items

- Wash kit & tissues & travel-sick pills (if required)
- Towel(s)
- Water bottle (drink water regularly to prevent dehydration)
- Sunglasses
- Paper or notebook and pen/pencil

Essentials

- Passport
- GHIC (the replacement for the old EHIC)
- Travel insurance documentation
- Medication
- Small backpack
- European plug adaptor
- Sunscreen (high factor)
- After-sun cream/moisturiser
- Lip balm
- Travel sickness medication (if required)

Extras

- Phone (and gadget or device if you wish – making sure these are suitably insured)
- Camera (consider a disposable camera)
- Reading book
- Language phrase book
- Chargers for gadgets (if required)
- Wet wipes and hand sanitiser
- Waterproof watch
- Travel pillow