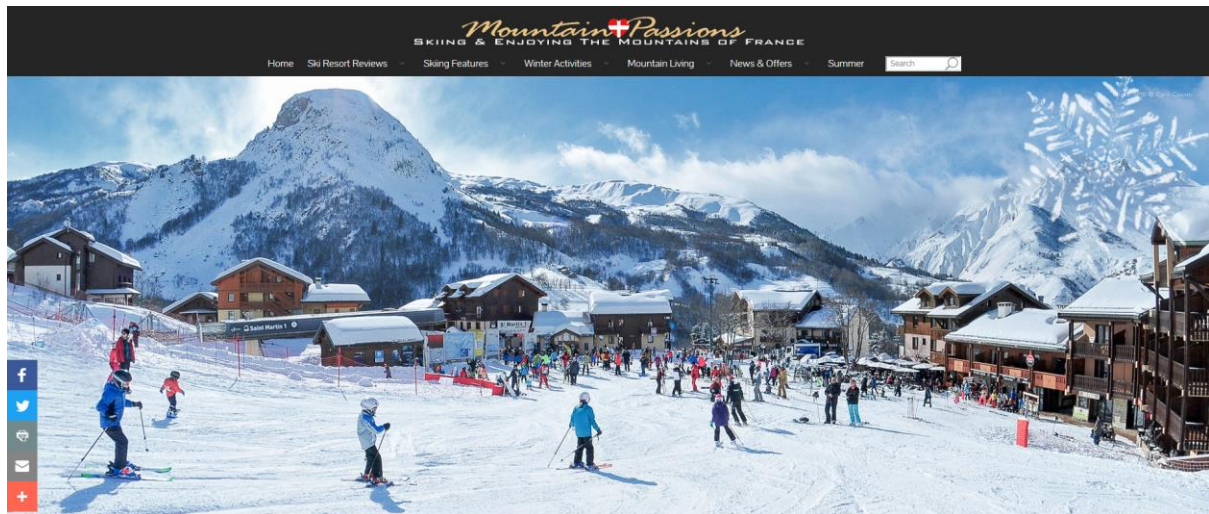


<http://www.mountainpassions.com/winter/ski-resort-reviews/ski-st-martin-de-belleville/#practical-information>



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# St Martin de Belleville

## Les 3 Vallées, Savoie, French Alps

[Resort Insight](#) | [The Ski Area](#) | [About the Village](#) | [Why go skiing here](#) | [Practical Information](#)

In the world-famous 3 Vallées and accessed via Moûtiers. The drive up the mountain is long and winding but quicker than continuing all the way to Val Thorens.

Two high-speed, high-capacity lifts – a gondola, followed by a 6-seater chair, takes skiers smoothly up the mountain to drop in on Méribel, which in turn offers rapid access to Courchevel. Alternatively, ski into nearby Les Menuires, or head considerably higher in and around Val Thorens.



# The Ski Area

Billed as 'the world's largest ski area', the 3 Vallées should have something, somewhere for just about every kind of skier, so we've spent quite some time getting to find out how the various bases compare – see our resort reviews of Courchevel Moriond, Les Menuires, Méribel, Brides-les-Bains and Orelle-Val Thorens.

Like its higher-profile neighbours, Saint Martin de Belleville offers skiers access to **600km of groomed terrain**, spread across **338 downhill runs** served by around **160 ski lifts**. Completing the picture are groomed **ski-touring** itineraries, along with a wealth of **off-piste** opportunities, including the **Vallée des Belleilles**. Either way, armed with a **3 Vallées lift pass** you can cover some impressive mileage here, taking in **Courchevel, Les Menuires, La Tania, Méribel and Val Thorens**.

If you're happy to ski closer to home and save some money, the local pass which includes Les Menuires might be worth considering. Saint Martin de Belleville's **nursery slopes** just above the village are super-accessible for raw beginners, but progressing means taking the gondola to join a blue return run (there are no green options).

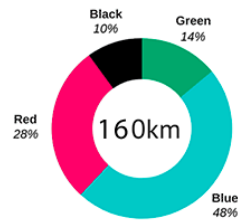
Intermediates, though, will enjoy some **long scenic cruises** from the St Martin Express chairlift back to the village or exploring the varied terrain above **Les Menuires 1850**. It's well-groomed, served by capable **high-speed lifts** and there's plenty of it, including some long blue and red cruising runs, plus a couple of greens. It's easy to overlook the excellent skiing to be had around Les Menuires.

## Resort Information



Altitude : 1450mm - 3230mm

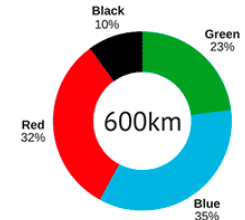
St Martin de Belleville  
Pistes Total: 160 km



12 Green  
41 Blue  
24 Red  
8 Black

Ski Resort Lifts : 33  
7 Magic Carpets  
5 Draglifts  
13 Chairlifts  
8 Gondolas

3 Vallées  
Pistes Total: 600 km



55 Green  
131 Blue  
107 Red  
35 Black

Ski Domain Lifts: 180  
64 Draglifts  
60 Chairlifts  
1 Funitel  
41 Gondolas  
2 Cable Cars

## Other ski resorts in the Three Valleys



© Cyril Cousin

# The Ski Village

Being sited at an altitude of just **1450m** (like Méribel Centre, in fact) means that it's not snow-sure, although **Saint Martin de Belleville** can be quicker to reach than its higher, purpose-built neighbours. Traditionalists love its relaxed vibe and compact layout, the **old Savoyard village** looking largely unchanged at the foot of the front de neige. That said, tucked away discretely around the edges are some beautifully-appointed **boutique chalets**.

That doesn't mean you can't still find more affordable options, although things are moving perceptibly upmarket, so don't think of it as a budget option. Perhaps the most interesting development is the recent addition of **La Caseblanche**, a self-contained hamlet of **premium self-catering chalets** with direct **ski-in/ski-out access** to the pistes (see our *Tried & Tested* review below).

## Staying There

- ♥♥♥♥ Value for Money
- ♥♥♥♥ Accommodation
- ♥♥♥♥ Dining Out
- ♥♥♥♥ Nightlife
- ♥♥♥♥ Village Charm



St Martin de Belleville is a Famille Plus resort

Famille Plus is a national label awarded to tourist destinations offering a special welcome and services tailored to families and children.

See [Practical Information](#) below for accommodation suggestions.



## Why go skiing in St Martin de Belleville ?

Of all the 3 Vallées villages, this is the obvious choice for anyone looking for a low-profile, **low-rise hideaway with a premium feel**.

However, a lack of a really gentle return run means that it's probably not ideal for first-timers, although things really open up for anyone who is happy on blues. There again, the 3 Vallées also have some wide, reassuring reds for those ready to up their game.

For more experienced skiers on a mission to get around and put some real distance under their skies, linked domains don't come any bigger than the **3 Vallées**. Be aware, though, that such international renown has its downside, namely that even here some areas – notably around Méribel – can become congested at peak times.

## Skiing There

- ♥♥♥♥ Beginners / Families
- ♥♥♥♥ Intermediates
- ♥♥♥♥ Advanced / Expert
- ♥♥♥♥ Mountain Scenery

32 Snowparks  
1 Half-Pipe



### YES PLEASE...

- Near-limitless skiing in the 3 Vallées.
- Friendly, traditional village feel.
- Premium accommodation, including ski-in/ski-out.
- One for restaurant aficionados.
- Ease of access, including rail travellers.



### YES BUT...

- Relatively low altitude can compromise snow cover.
- Limited beginner facilities locally
- One-lift access to the skiing



### OUR TIPS

- Embrace the relaxed vibe, focus on quality skiing and enjoy the fabulous scenery away from the big-name villages.
- Visit the museum to learn about bygone life in the valley, and how today's ski villages were planned and constructed.
- Try a non-ski activity – guided snowsoe or Nordic walks will take you to places most skiers never see.

## Practical Information

Where to Stay	Things to do	Bars & Restaurants	Ski Hire	How to get there
---------------	--------------	--------------------	----------	------------------

### Chalets Caseblanche



This south-facing complex of 34 luxury chalets/apartments enjoys one of the very best and quietest locations in St Martin de Belleville, in the Grangeriales quarter, just 50m from the St Martin 1 gondola (ski-in ski-out in the right conditions), giving easy access to the 3 Valleys area, and ski school meeting point; just 300m from the centre of the resort.

We stayed in a 3-bedroom chalet with large balcony (most with hot tub), comfortable lounge and large fully-equipped kitchen/diner on the ground floor. All the chalet interiors differ but they are **bright and airy and furnished to a high level**. In our chalet, there was a double room and ensuite on the 1st floor and two further bedrooms with bathrooms and a sauna on the lower floor. The chalet is well-planned to maximise the light streaming into the lounge, which even illuminates the upstairs bedroom by the clever use of space-saving sliding doors. There's **plenty of storage** too, utilising the entrance hall for outdoor gear and groceries, and spacious wardrobes in the bedrooms. All your ski gear can be stored in the nearby **heated locker room**, which has access onto the lower slopes.

### Le Trait d'Union



A recently restored mountain refuge with charming accommodation in three rooms, also offers **authentic mountain cuisine** at lunchtimes and evenings. **Accessible by ski or on foot**, you can dine there in the evening and spend the night on the mountain. A 2-course evening menu costs 23€ (booking essential), overnight accommodation and breakfast 35€. Contact [refuge.letraitdunion@gmail.com](mailto:refuge.letraitdunion@gmail.com) or [+33 \(0\)7 70 28 85 77](tel:+330770288577)

### Chalets Home



**Unique chalets and apartments** conceived in contemporary Savoyard style. Finished and furnished with startling simplicity, the interiors are refreshingly **practical for families**, with ample space for grown-ups who need a quiet corner, while kids will love having their own space. The family rooms combine comfort and artistry. In fact, art is everywhere, as are splashes of colour bursting out from a neutral palette of natural wood, stone and concrete.

**Fully equipped and with a free shuttle service** to the slopes, HomebyU chalets and apartments can be booked via Peak Retreats [023 9283 9310](tel:02392839310) (UK) or [+44 23 9283 9310](tel:+442392839310) [reservations@peakretreats.co.uk](mailto:reservations@peakretreats.co.uk)



Within the complex, there's a **ski-hire shop**, a **snack bar** and a **brasserie** run by the Meilleur family who own La Bouitte. As the chalets are slightly out of the village, guests can take advantage of the **meal delivery service** offered by the brasserie, plus **daily bread orders**.

Overall, a really stylish and comfortable chalet with nearby covered parking and easy access to the slopes.



Enquiries and bookings:

Peak Retreats

023 9283 9310 (UK) or +44 23 9283 9310

reservations@peakretreats.co.uk

Where to Stay	Things to do	Bars & Restaurants	Ski Hire	How to get there
<p><b>Musée de Saint Martin</b></p> <p>73440 Saint-Martin-de-Belleville            Tel : <a href="tel:+330479244787">+33 (0)4 79 24 47 87</a>            Open daily except Saturdays, times vary.            For more info visit <a href="http://www.st-martin-belleville.com">www.st-martin-belleville.com</a>            Entry €3, children free. Guided: €1 extra.</p> <p>The story of Saint-Martin de Belleville is told with extraordinary domestic, agricultural and other exhibits. There are interactive and audio-visual experiences and the fascinating story of the tourist revolution which started in the sixties. A must for anyone who has fallen in love with the village or is interested in the development of ski resorts in France. English audioguides available.</p>				

Where to Stay	Things to do	Bars & Restaurants	Ski Hire	How to get there
<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> <div style="width: 30%;"> <p><b>Le Trait d'Union</b></p>  <p>A recently restored mountain refuge with charming accommodation in three rooms, also offers <b>authentic mountain cuisine</b> at lunchtimes and evenings. <b>Accessible by ski or on foot</b>, there's a cosy dining room inside or a sunny terrace where you can dine with <b>magnificent mountain views</b>. We left our skis at the end of the footpath to the refuge, signed from near the <b>top of the Biolley piste</b>, and walked the rest of the way in spring sunshine and soft snow. A warm welcome awaits and plenty of wholesome food to follow. After a satisfying and relaxed meal, don't be surprised when your hosts bring out the accordions and sing to their guests!</p> <p>Generous lunchtime dishes cost around 16€, homemade desserts 5€-6€. A 2-course evening menu costs 23€ (booking essential), overnight accommodation and breakfast 35€. Contact <a href="mailto:refuge.letraitdunion@gmail.com">refuge.letraitdunion@gmail.com</a> or <a href="tel:+330470288577">+33 (0)7 70 28 85 77</a></p> </div> <div style="width: 30%;"> <p><b>Restaurant La Voûte</b></p> <p>73440 Saint-Martin-de-Belleville            Tel : <a href="tel:+330479089148">+33 (0)4 79 08 91 48</a></p> <p>Family-run bar restaurant in the centre of the village and just a few steps from the foot of the pistes. It's busy in the main holiday season so best to reserve a table for lunchtime to enjoy the extensive menu or just a pizza (from 11-50€). Eat on the terrace or in bad weather there's a bustling, cosy interior. The terrace is a popular meeting place for an après-ski drink.</p> </div> <div style="width: 30%;"> <p><b>La Bouitte</b></p> <p>73440 Saint Martin de Belleville            Tel: <a href="tel:+330479089677">+33 (0)4 79 08 96 77</a></p>  <p>La Bouitte is an exceptional savoyard chalet. René Meilleur established a Savoyard restaurant there in 1976. Twenty years later, he was joined by his son, Maxime, whereupon the chefs evolved their craft and achieved their second Michelin star in 2008. A visit to La Bouitte is a memorable experience, where guests discover many different dishes prepared according to the season with astounding artistry and concentration of flavours. La Bouitte also offers charming guest accommodation with spa.</p> </div> </div>				

### Advanced Booking Savings



Save precious skiing time when you book your ski equipment online with Alpinresorts.com. After a quick and easy reservation everything will be waiting for you when you get to your destination. You get to choose the shop and there's a BEST-PRICE GUARANTEE. Make BIG savings by booking online today!

Q Resort, village, country, shop name

1st day of rental: 2/10/2019      Last day of rental: 3/10/2019

Number of people: 0 Adults 0 Children

**SEARCH**

### Getting there

**By car**  
Follow the A430 to Albertville, then Moûtiers. Take the D117 to St Martin de Belleville.

**By air**  
The nearest airport is **Chambery Savoie Mont-Blanc** (100km). Jet2.com offers low cost flights to the French Alps from 7 UK airports.

For bus connections see [www.mobisavoie.fr](http://www.mobisavoie.fr) (in English) to book your journey in advance. Alpes Savoie Tours offers more individual service with vehicles from 4 to 53 seats - see [www.alpes-savoie-tours.com](http://www.alpes-savoie-tours.com)

**By train**  
It couldn't be easier - there are trains travelling from London direct to Moûtiers every Saturday. High-speed TGV services run daily from Paris.

### Cheap flights to the Alps

Compare and book flights on [BudgetAir.co.uk](http://BudgetAir.co.uk). Find cheap flights to France in just a few clicks.

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On the busy N90 from **Albertville** the attention focuses intently on the fast-approaching exits signed to familiar-sounding ski areas. As we approach **Moûtiers** those of us homing in on the **3 Vallées** split from the Bourg Saint-Maurice traffic and peel off once again, this time leaving those bound for Brides-Les-Bains, Courchevel and Méribel, while we focus on the climb signed to Saint Martin de Belleville, Les Menuires and **Val Thorens**.

“ the nervous chatter of skis on icy, early morning snow reminds us that the end of another ski season isn’t far away.. ”



Bound for Méribel Mottaret from 3 Marches (2704m).



Direct to Méribel Centre from the St Martin Express chairlift.

### At home, in a 3 Vallées hideaway

Turning off into **Saint Martin de Belleville** feels good, not just because it's the closest of the three, but also since it still looks and feels like a mountain village, and seems determined to stay that way. Our accommodation at **Chalets Caseblanche** is no threat to the skyline, despite the scale of this recent chalet-style **ski-in/ski-out** development. Over the years we've stayed in all kinds of self-catering ski accommodation, but this is right up there, and we feel instantly at home.

As we head out the following morning the nervous chatter of our skis on icy, early-morning snow reminds us that the end of another ski season isn't far away. Things improve visibly, though, as the **Saint Martin 1 gondola** takes us smoothly up to the **1800m** mark, the departure point for a couple of blue-graded return runs. We transfer to the **Saint Martin Express** high-speed 6-seater chairlift, however, for a haul up to **2404m**.



Mild temperatures in early April but there's plenty of snow up here.



Jérusalem (blue) adds exhilaration to the return to St Martin.

### Into Méribel, or onwards to Les Menuires?

It's a key liaison point, offering skiers the choice of onward drops into **Méribel Mottaret** (1750m), **Méribel Centre** (1450m), some great return runs to Saint Martin de Belleville or a blue-graded cruise over to **Les Menuires** on the **Gros Tougne** piste. We intend to remain high for now, though, so follow it only as far as the Granges chairlift. A couple of minutes later the high-speed 6-seater drops us at the **Roc des Trois Marches** (2704m).

From here it's possible to take the **Alouette** red piste over to the **Montvallon gondola** for a ride up to 2952m for scenic, mostly-red drops into Méribel Mottaret, with **1200m of vertical**. Our time being limited, we save that option for another trip and instead enjoy the rest of the day re-acquainting ourselves with the excellent terrain above Les Menuires.



Arriving at the top of Bruyères and Mont de la Chambre lifts from Les Menuires.



Clear signage helps skiers navigate the vast 3 Vallées ski area.

## Day two: it's time for Val Tho'

The following day we take a similar route, this time working our way over to ride the **Bruyères gondola** from Les Menuires up to the **Col de la Chambre** (2841m). From here a wealth of possibilities opens up above Val Thorens, and we pack in as much as we can before working our way back to Saint Martin de Belleville for an unpressured late lunch at **Le Trait d'Union**, a gem of a mountain refuge in a secluded setting above the village.

During previous visits to the 3 Vallées we'd made a point of skiing over to St Martin de Belleville, not least since it's the perfect spot for a relaxed lunch. This time, however, we had the opportunity to stay here and get to know it much better. What we discovered was a cheerful, welcoming and practical base from which to explore all that ski terrain. We therefore look forward to returning to **Saint Martin de Belleville** from time to time – and not merely for lunch.



Saint Martin de Belleville remains a living and working mountain community.

Feature by Roger Moss, © 2019

### Related Features:



Les Menuires



Oreille-Val Thorens



Courchevet Moriond



Brides-les-Bains



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