



Spotlight Alpine Property Market

2015/16



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Navigating the property landscape of the Alps, and beyond

Those Alpine home owners who have acquired property in one of the most popular prime locations of Switzerland in recent years may be experiencing mixed emotions, depending on whether they want to sell in the near future or not. Having invested in one of the more recently buoyant Alpine markets and, more importantly, having invested into a Swiss franc denominated asset, they will most likely have seen some currency appreciation.

However, the strength of the franc now means there are fewer non-Swiss buyers in the market and they will be noticing higher maintenance and servicing costs. Meanwhile, cheaper properties in France and Austria may have been letting well and providing good euro income but appreciating less in capital value.

All this illustrates the perils and profits of owning Alpine real estate and the necessity of choosing

the right property and the right resort, depending on the length of ownership intended, whether investment is for capital growth, income, a mixture of both – or just for pleasure.

Added to these decisions are the questions of what is happening to demand for Alpine property generally and how this interacts with supply. It seems inevitable that new markets need to be found and/or resorts need to adapt and broaden their appeal to wider markets than winter-time downhill skiers, if their value is to be maintained.

This publication attempts to guide Alpine home buyers through the buying landscape and traverse the slopes of ski property investing. It highlights some of the global factors at work in determining ski demand and then highlights some of the property and resort characteristics which will help to weather the snowstorms and ensure maximum enjoyment on the piste. ■

▼ Will resorts need to broaden their appeal?



Notes about the publication

This document was published in September 2015. The data used in the charts and tables is the latest available at the time of going to press. Sources are included for all the charts.

SUMMARY



The Alps are host to the world's largest ski market, attracting 44% of global ski visitors annually. 04/05



A strong Swiss franc has made Swiss property expensive to foreign buyers. A weaker euro poses buying opportunities. 06/07



The recovery led by ultra-prime resorts spreads to the rest of the region. Infrastructure investment spurs new development. 08/09



US ski resorts are poised to benefit from an over-spill of demand following strong recovery in the residential markets of US cities. 12/13



From the Balkans to Japan, ski markets to watch in the coming decades. 14

SKI MARKET TRENDS

The Alps are home to 35% of the world's ski resorts and attract 44% of global ski visitors annually. The largest and most mature of all global winter sport markets, they are host to 82% of the world's largest ski resorts, that attract more than a million visitors each season.

Over recent years, France and Austria have seen growth in attendance, whilst Swiss resorts have experienced a steady decline, due to an ageing domestic population, and a trend for foreign skiers (who account for half the Swiss market) to opt for cheaper euro denominated resorts. The un-pegging of the Swiss franc from the euro earlier this year (see page 7) may put further downward pressure on Swiss attendance figures.

In spite of this, Switzerland boasts more prestigious ski resorts, and attracts more wealthy skiers from across the globe than any other country. The top tier Swiss resorts, together with a few French and Austrian locations, are frequented by celebrities, European Royalty and business magnates. They are well established destinations for the global super rich, both to ski and to buy property. There remain fiscal advantages to property ownership and or residency in Switzerland.

For most of the season, real estate values are likely to reflect falling accommodation costs. But in locations where real estate is rarer, high quality and scenic property will be more of a long term capital hold.

In short, we envisage a two-tier Alpine market developing until visitor numbers start to increase again. On the one hand, exclusivity and rarity will hold value and on the other, falling income returns, in locations subject to most competition and unable to increase market share, may see values fall. Buyers of Alpine homes will need to review the fundamental qualities of the resort into which they are buying in order to assess which will be winners and which losers.

Resort conditions

Physical conditions and resort infrastructure play a key role in determining the quality of a ski resort, and in turn the depth of market for accommodation – whether to rent or buy. We have analysed 35 resorts in the Alps by looking at the resort size (number of guest beds) and ski conditions (average monthly snowfall and season length), as shown in fig 2.

In general, French resorts are large with good snowfall and long seasons, extending the rental potential of property. Meribel and Courchevel

are two large resorts with especially long seasons (168 days). France also contains some of the world's best infrastructure and is the only developed skiing destination in the world that is predominantly owned by one dedicated skiing maintenance operator, Compagnie des Alpes.

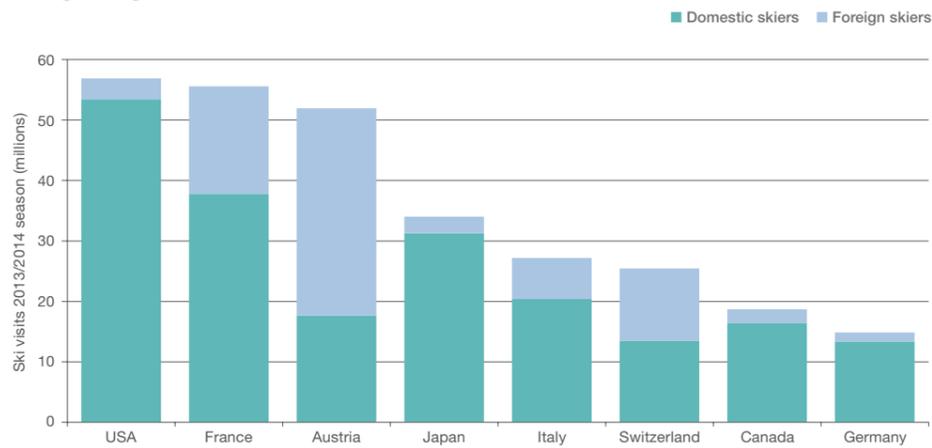
Cost of skiing

The largest Alpine resorts span several valleys. The Three Valleys in France is one of the largest connected ski areas in the world.

French resorts deliver the best value for a ski pass with an average of 1.7km of piste for every euro spent on a ski pass compared to just 0.85km in Switzerland. Even accounting for a stronger Swiss franc, the disparity between France and Switzerland is significant.

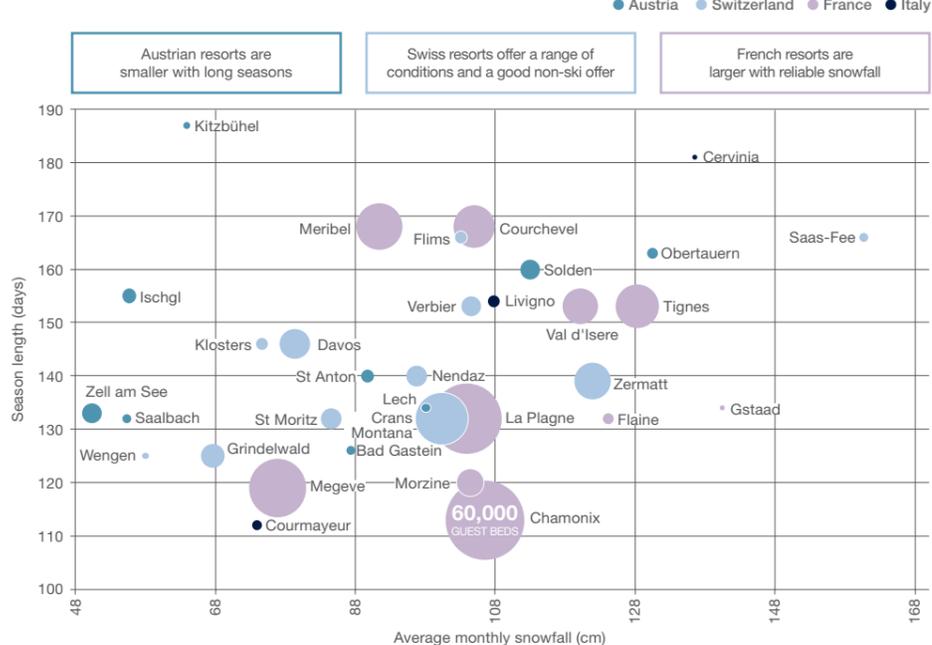
Germany has one of the biggest skiing populations with 14.6 million national skiers, but being on the periphery of the Alps, has a flatter terrain relative to its Alpine neighbours. Because of this, German skiers prefer neighbouring Austria as their skiing destination. The majority of their resorts are relatively small and in some cases it is more common to buy a one day or a weekend ski pass rather than the usual six day pass favoured in the larger resorts. ■

FIGURE 1 Largest global ski destinations, 2014



Source: Laurent Vanat

FIGURE 2 Resort size and ski conditions



Source: Savills World Research, Igluski, Onthesnow, Bergfex, Ultimate-Ski

The United States is the world's largest ski market (Figure 1), with 56.9 million ski visits in 2014, closely followed by France, with 55.6 million. The Swiss market is half the size of the French and Austrian markets (25.5m visits), but is significant in that it is focused at the premium end.

Skier flows

While the majority of skiers undertake the sport in their home region, given its compact size, Europe stands out as the market with the most cross border flows. Austria has more foreign skiers than domestic ones, making it the third biggest market globally, with 51.9 million skiers, 66% of whom come from abroad.

In spite of having relatively limited ski options in their home country, Germany has the largest number of skiers globally (14.6m), the majority of whom ski in Austria. The UK has the world's fifth largest number of national skiers (6.3m). Aside from some indoor skiing, the UK market is almost entirely outbound, with France the favoured destination.

Challenges in Europe persist. With the populations of major European markets stagnating, ski markets are unlikely to benefit from significant growth in the medium term. At the same time, new markets in Eastern Europe are modernising and opening up to the west, which will further dilute demand across the region. Conversely, economic recovery in the major source markets (most notably the UK), should drive visitor demand, and in turn, home buying activity.

This competition means that skiing should become a less expensive holiday option in all but the most select locations in coming years. In locations where chalets and apartments are

FIGURE 3 Ski Value Index

Country	Resort	Kilometres of piste per euro of ski pass
FR	Chamonix	2.7
FR	Morzine	2.6
CH	Mayrhofen	2.6
FR	Méribel	2.1
FR	Courchevel	2.1
FR	La Plagne	1.5
CH	Verbier	1.4
FR	Megève	1.2
FR	Tignes	1.2
FR	Val d'Isère	1.2
CH	Bad Gastein	1.0
CH	St Moritz	1.0
CH	Davos	1.0
CH	Klosters	1.0
CH	Zermatt	1.0
CH	Saalbach	0.9
CH	Grimnitz	0.8
CH	Gstaad	0.8
CH	Villars	0.8
CH	Kitzbühel	0.7
CH	Andermatt	0.7
CH	Zell am See	0.6
CH	Sölden	0.6
IT	Cortina d'Ampezzo	0.5
CH	Crans-Montana	0.5
IT	Livigno	0.5
CH	Obertauern	0.5
IT	Passo Tonale	0.5
IT	Courmayeur	0.4
CH	Saas-Fee	0.3
IT	Madesimo	0.3
DE	Brauneck / Lenggries	0.2
DE	Oberjoch Bad Hindelang	0.2
DE	Spitzingsee - Tegernsee	0.2

Source: Savills World Research



▼ Chamonix tops the Ski Value Index

THE ALPINE MARKET IN THE EUROPEAN HOUSING CONTEXT

The residential markets of Alpine resorts are driven first and foremost by second home purchasers and investors, but are also influenced by national trends. To fully understand their drivers therefore, it is necessary to examine the underlying market in the country that shape them.

Although originating in the USA, the North Atlantic debt crisis

was amplified in Europe by the subsequent severe impacts on its housing markets. Some of the more buoyant markets in recent years have been non-euro denominated (namely the UK and Switzerland), benefiting from their position outside the Eurozone, although their performance has since diverged.

Switzerland

Switzerland's residential market has seen steady growth during the last seven years. Safe-haven fundamentals and prudent economic management underpinned demand in a supply constrained residential market. But last year has seen the market slow. In January of 2015 the Swiss franc was decoupled from the euro, appreciating against other leading currencies.

This has made Swiss property more expensive for foreign purchasers (see The Impact of Currency panel).

The costly franc has led to a fall in exports, contributing to a cooling of the Swiss economy. Low population growth is forecast. The country's strict citizenship system coupled with the recent Lex Weber initiative (see p.9) will serve to restrict foreign investment. Together, we anticipate price falls at a national level in the medium term.

Austria

Austria witnessed a period of exceptionally strong residential price growth at a time when many other Eurozone markets were falling. At the national level, prices have increased by 41% since 2008, compared to falls of 0.9% in France over the same period. Residential markets were driven by record low interest rates, and supported by low levels of unemployment in a resilient domestic economy.

The market has since slowed, with prices appreciating by just 1.2% in the year to Q1 2015. Vienna, which had led price growth, has since slowed too.

The city's prime markets are driven in part by foreign buyers, particularly those from Eastern Europe and the CIS. Economic sanctions in Russia and ongoing troubles in Ukraine have contributed to a decline in transactions at the top end of the market.

The market is a rental one (41.5% of the households rent their home), and rents continue to rise – average rents plus running costs are up 29% since 2008.

France

The French residential market 'double-dipped', recovering to a 2011 peak within two years, but has followed a downward trend since. While prices remain suppressed, transaction levels across France have rallied 35% from a 2009 low, spurred by record low mortgage rates.

Challenges lie ahead in consolidating public finances, improving competitiveness and reducing unemployment. Weak economic growth is forecast, which will bear down on the country's real estate markets, although a change of rhetoric in President Hollande's policies toward the wealthy has helped the prime sector.

THE IMPACT OF CURRENCY

Swiss franc strengthens while the euro declines

The Swiss franc has long been considered a safe haven currency, and high volumes of foreign buying during the Eurozone crisis led the Swiss National Bank to introduce a cap on its value against the euro. In January of 2015 this cap was removed, and the Swiss franc quickly appreciated, making Swiss property more expensive for non-CHF denominated purchasers. Conversely, it has made selling more profitable for non-resident vendors.

The euro, meanwhile, has depreciated against major currencies since 2014, including the US dollar and UK pound. The ECB's quantitative easing program, anticipated US interest rate rises in the medium term, along with the Greek crisis, have all contributed to the euro's decline. This makes French and Austrian property cheaper to both USD and GBP buyers, down more than 6% in currency terms.

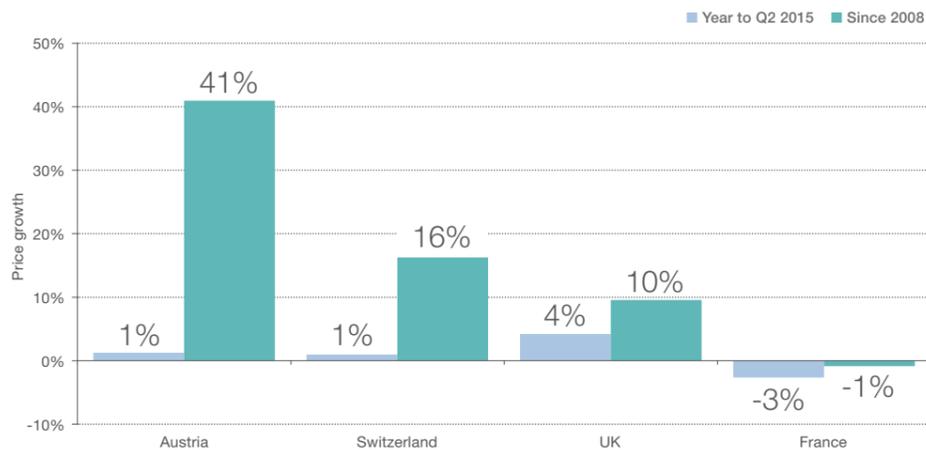
FIGURE 6

Worked examples

Country	Example	In local currency	Foreign currency equivalent Jan 15	Currency shift (Jan-Aug 15)	Foreign currency equivalent Aug 15
 Switzerland Euro buyer €		CHF 10.5m	€8.7m	↑ 11.2%	€9.7m
 France USD buyer \$		€5.5m	\$6.6m	↓ -6.1%	\$6.2m
 Austria GBP buyer £		€4m	£3.1m	↓ -6.2%	£2.9m

Source: Savills World Research

FIGURE 4 National house price performance: key Alpine markets vs UK



Source: OeNB, Statistik, SNB, Land Registry, INSEE, Savills World Research

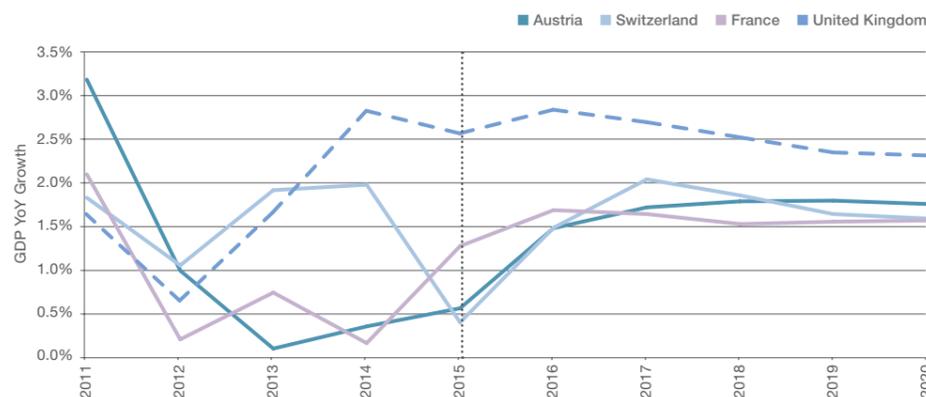


Switzerland's residential market has seen steady growth over past 7 years



Low mortgage rates have increased transaction levels across France

FIGURE 5 GDP growth forecast: key Alpine markets vs UK



Source: Oxford Economics, Savills World Research



Switzerland

THE RESORT MARKETS

Focused on France, Switzerland and Austria, but also including Italy, Germany, Slovenia and Liechtenstein, the residential markets of Alpine resorts are as diverse as the countries in which they are located.

They range from the ultra-exclusive, ultra-prime resorts of Courchevel 1850, Gstaad and St Moritz, to mainstream resorts such as Grimentz, La Plagne and Obertauern. Prime prices in Courchevel 1850 are 93% more expensive than the Alpine average, in Andermatt and Zermatt they are 75% and 72% higher respectively. Austrian resorts are cheaper on average, Obertauern is 55% below the Alpine-wide benchmark.

Additional home buying across the region peaked in 2007/8, with transactions declining significantly during the recessionary years. Price falls in most resort markets were not realised as owners rode out the market until recovery, which began in 2013 and was led by prime property. Recovery has been supported by improving economic conditions in the major source markets, most notably the UK, and a renewed appetite for second homes.

92%
purchase for both own use and investment



Top Swiss resorts attract purchasers from US, Russia, Hong Kong & Malaysia



Germans are important to the Austrian market



Brits are major players in both Austria and France

42%
The majority of purchasers are aged 40-49

RESORT TRENDS

Switzerland
Buying activity in the Swiss resorts has cooled in 2015. Foreign buyers, especially important to the top end of the market, have been impacted by a strong Swiss franc. In the medium term Lex Weber will put a cap on the number of second homes available to purchase in some markets, which may in turn push up prices in the face of limited supply.

Swiss resorts offer premium facilities and investment in infrastructure continues. Grimentz gained a new lift in the 2014/15 season, linking it to neighbouring Zinal, and new apartment schemes have followed. Andermatt has benefited from huge investment, with the new Chedi Hotel an 18 hole golf course and 400 residential units. This has pushed prices to levels seen in Switzerland's more established prime resorts.

Villars, a year round resort with quality international schools, has seen high levels of new supply in recent years and suffered from poor snowfall. This has impacted pricing and there are deals to be done for those who shop around. Prime apartments trade at between CHF 10,000 and CHF 12,000 psm.

France
Sales volumes in the ski regions of Haute-Savoie and Savoie have held up better than the rest of France, whilst a weaker euro has opened up investment opportunities for UK buyers. Prime prices across resorts are now recovering to pre crisis levels but are still notably below neighbouring Switzerland.

Courchevel 1850 remains one of the most desirable ski resorts in Europe with outstanding facilities and infrastructure. Ultra prime prices here are the highest in the region (Figure 8). Val d'Isere, popular with the UK and international market, has seen new premium restaurants and boutiques open. There is rental potential, and yields for top end chalets are circa 3.5% gross.

Chamonix continues to see recovery, and prices are now at or around the pre crisis peak of +/- €10,000 psm for prime chalets and apartments. This large, accessible resort is popular with British buyers, who have been assisted in 2015 by the comparative strength of sterling against the euro.

Austria
The Austrian Alpine resort market remained strong over the downturn, offering excellent value for money compared to the more established French and Swiss resorts. With continued investment in resort infrastructure and growing foreign skier participation levels there is still more headroom for upward price movement.

Many Austrian resorts are dual season. Zell am See property prices continue to rise due to high demand and low supply, but still represent value for money. Prices range from €5,000-€7,000 psm. A planned lift linking Zell am See to neighbouring Saalbach will only serve to increase its appeal.

Kitzbuehl stands apart with its designer boutiques and premium hotels. Home to the famous Hahnenkamm downhill race and popular with celebrities, property prices are the highest of any Austrian resort, ranging from €10,000-€15,000 psm.

Ultra-prime ski resorts
A home in a top-tier Alpine resort is a key component of global property portfolios for the world's wealthiest individuals. A property in Courchevel 1850, Gstaad or St Moritz complements a city residence in London, Paris or Moscow.

Ultra prime resorts offer much more than just skiing. Quality dining (Courchevel offers seven Michelin starred restaurants alone) and luxury shopping are the norm. St Moritz offers polo, Verbier quality night-life, and Gstaad highly regarded international schools. The concentration of High Net Worth Individuals also make these important places in which to build and strengthen professional networks and undertake business among peers.

Courchevel tops our ultra prime price league, with typical prices of €31,340 psm. The French ultra prime resort is followed by the premier Swiss destinations: Gstaad, St Moritz, Zermatt and Verbier, at between €26,450 and €31,220 psm. In spite of limited price growth, a strong Swiss franc has pushed these markets up the rankings in currency terms.

For comparative purposes we have included two premier North American resorts, Vail and Whistler. Only Colorado's Vail is on par with the top European competition at €25,200 psm. Demand from America's super rich and limited supply keeps prices at a premium. Ultra-prime prices in Whistler, the largest resort in North America, stand at €16,860 psm.



The Austrian Alpine resort market remained strong over the downturn

“Swiss resorts offer premium facilities and investment in infrastructure continues”

FIGURE 8 Ultra prime resorts price league

Resort	Price per sqm
Courchevel 1850	€ 31,340
Gstaad	€ 31,220
St Moritz	€ 30,900
Zermatt	€ 29,070
Verbier	€ 26,450
Vail	€ 25,200
Meribel	€ 21,630
Val-d'Isere	€ 19,700
Megeve	€ 17,530
Whistler Blackcomb	€ 16,860

Source: Savills World Research

SWITZERLAND

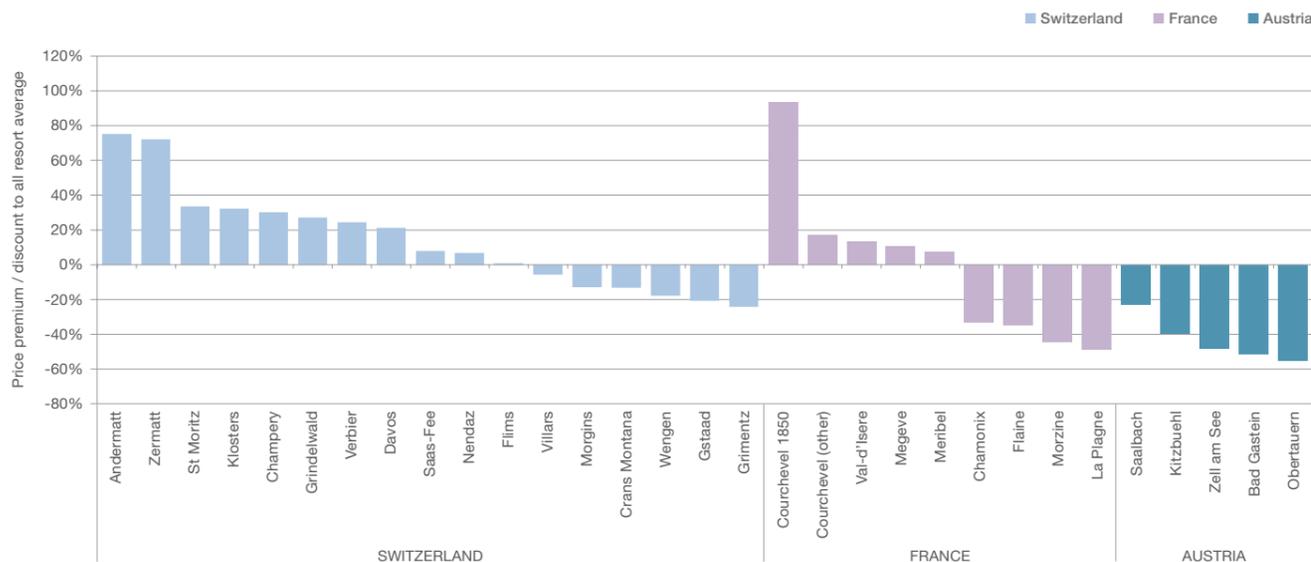
Policy and planning trends

The Lex Weber law limits the number of second homes in Switzerland, aimed in particular at tourist regions. The initiative was led by environmentalists who want to prevent excessive development in mountainous areas. Lex Weber severely curtails new development and will have the effect of pushing additional home buyers into existing stock, which in turn may drive up prices.

As of January 2013, cantons must ensure that the second homes inventory does not exceed 20% of the total housing stock in the municipalities. Those that are already over the 20% cap are particularly hard hit, given there is no further headroom for new development. The government has indicated some leeway for these municipalities – redevelopment of barns or dilapidated hotels may be permitted, for example – but the scope for new large scale development is limited.

Restrictions already apply to foreign nationals buying holiday homes in Switzerland. The Lex Koller law caps the number of non-resident buyers to 1,500 per year. Permits are split up between the Swiss Cantons, the majority allocated to the south-west region: Bernese Oberland, Valais and Vaud – the areas in which many of the ski resorts are concentrated.

FIGURE 7 Prime property price premiums and discounts by resort



Source: Savills World Research

THE ALPS: RESORT MARKET SNAPSHOTS



CHAMONIX

Prime purchase price range:
€5,000 - €10,000 psm
Pistes: 762km
6 day lift pass: €293
Popular with: Extreme skiers, mountaineers

Chamonix is one of the oldest ski destinations in the French Alps. A steep resort with a vertical drop of nearly 2,800m from its highest lift at 3,777m, it is popular in the summer with hikers and climbers. With most of the slopes located above 2,000m, snowfall is reliable. Chamonix is a large resort, but the centre is traffic free.



CRANS MONTANA

Prime purchase price range:
€8,000 - €12,000 psm
Typical ultra-prime price:
€18,000 psm
Pistes: 140km
6 day lift pass: € 267
Popular with: Russians, Sir Roger Moore

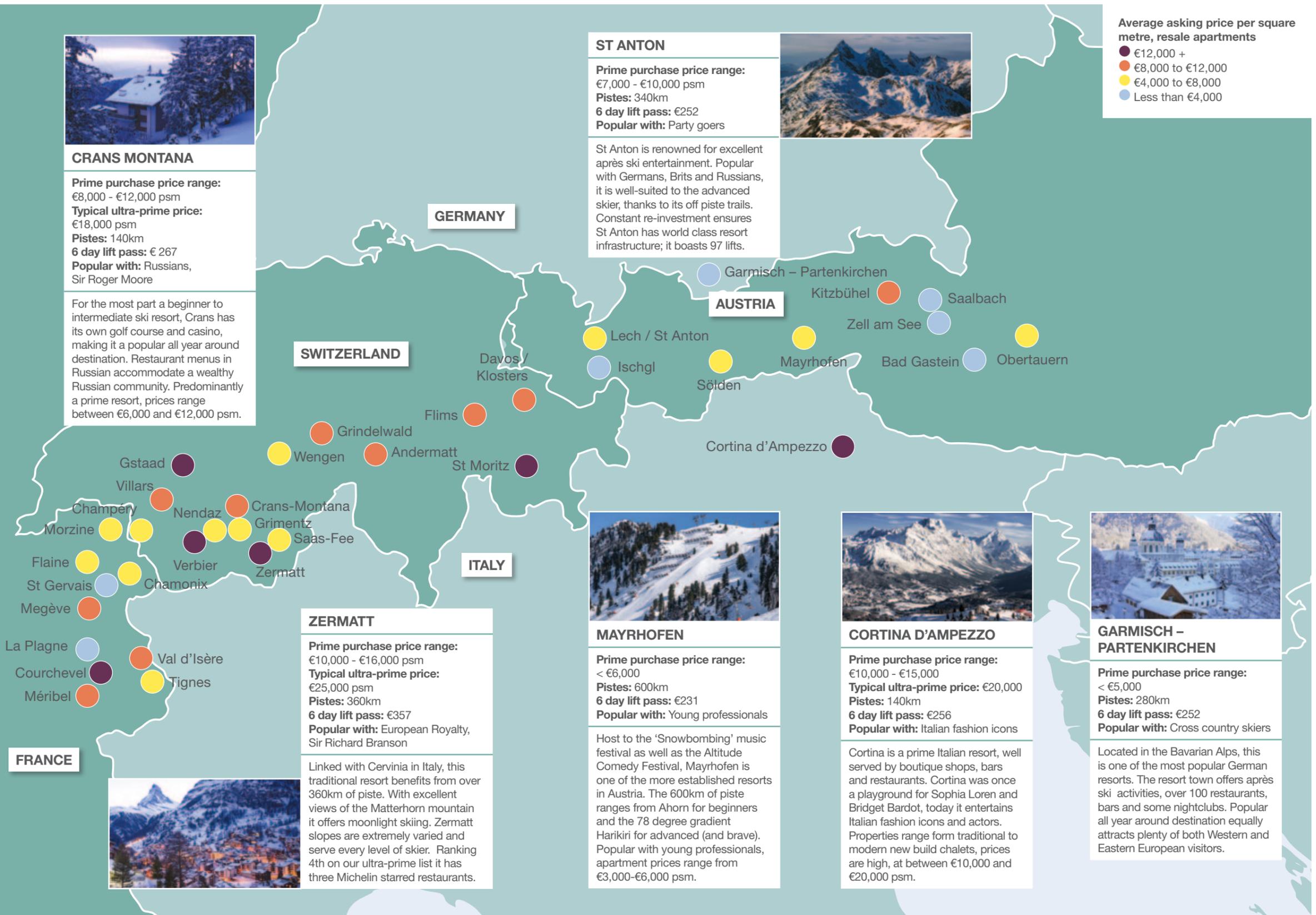
For the most part a beginner to intermediate ski resort, Crans has its own golf course and casino, making it a popular all year around destination. Restaurant menus in Russian accommodate a wealthy Russian community. Predominantly a prime resort, prices range between €6,000 and €12,000 psm.



TIGNES

Prime purchase price range:
< €13,000psm
Pistes: 300km
6 day lift pass: € 260
Popular with: Groups

One of the highest resorts in the Alps, Tignes benefits from reliable snowfall and long seasons. The resort was largely developed in the 1960s, and is currently benefiting from regeneration. Located in the vast Espace Killy ski area, it offers 129 runs covering 300 km of piste. Tignes is one of the larger Alpine resorts with an estimated 33,000 guest beds.



ST ANTON

Prime purchase price range:
€7,000 - €10,000 psm
Pistes: 340km
6 day lift pass: €252
Popular with: Party goers

St Anton is renowned for excellent après ski entertainment. Popular with Germans, Brits and Russians, it is well-suited to the advanced skier, thanks to its off piste trails. Constant re-investment ensures St Anton has world class resort infrastructure; it boasts 97 lifts.



MAYRHOFEN

Prime purchase price range:
< €6,000
Pistes: 600km
6 day lift pass: €231
Popular with: Young professionals

Host to the 'Snowbombing' music festival as well as the Altitude Comedy Festival, Mayrhofen is one of the more established resorts in Austria. The 600km of piste ranges from Ahorn for beginners and the 78 degree gradient Harikiri for advanced (and brave). Popular with young professionals, apartment prices range from €3,000-€6,000 psm.



CORTINA D'AMPEZZO

Prime purchase price range:
€10,000 - €15,000
Typical ultra-prime price: €20,000
Pistes: 140km
6 day lift pass: €256
Popular with: Italian fashion icons

Cortina is a prime Italian resort, well served by boutique shops, bars and restaurants. Cortina was once a playground for Sophia Loren and Bridget Bardot, today it entertains Italian fashion icons and actors. Properties range from traditional to modern new build chalets, prices are high, at between €10,000 and €20,000 psm.



GARMISCH - PARTENKIRCHEN

Prime purchase price range:
< €5,000
Pistes: 280km
6 day lift pass: €252
Popular with: Cross country skiers

Located in the Bavarian Alps, this is one of the most popular German resorts. The resort town offers après ski activities, over 100 restaurants, bars and some nightclubs. Popular all year around destination equally attracts plenty of both Western and Eastern European visitors.



ZERMATT

Prime purchase price range:
€10,000 - €16,000 psm
Typical ultra-prime price:
€25,000 psm
Pistes: 360km
6 day lift pass: €357
Popular with: European Royalty, Sir Richard Branson

Linked with Cervinia in Italy, this traditional resort benefits from over 360km of piste. With excellent views of the Matterhorn mountain it offers moonlight skiing. Zermatt slopes are extremely varied and serve every level of skier. Ranking 4th on our ultra-prime list it has three Michelin starred restaurants.

Source: Savills World Research

NORTH AMERICA

The United States leads the world by number of skier visits, some 56.9 million in 2013/14 season. The US market has seen a small decline in activity since 2010/11, compounded by poor snowfall in California. Unlike Europeans, who pre-plan trips, many Americans drive to the slopes at short notice, so visits are highly sensitive to fluctuations in ski conditions.

For such a large country, the US has relatively few resorts of worldwide renown. Vail stands apart as an ultra-prime resort, benefiting from demand from the large UHNW community in the US. Prices are still below their 2007 high, but recovery has been driven by the top end of the market. Inventory is low and the best properties rarely trade. Privately owned and operated, Vail Resorts has invested more than \$500m on improvements in the last five years.

In contrast to the US, winter sports are a much wider part of Canadian culture, and the national ski participation rate stands at 12%. The Canadian market is reliant on a domestic and US customer base, although top-tier resorts such as Whistler benefit from visitors (and home buyers) from beyond North America.

Just 125 kilometres from Vancouver, Whistler played host to the 2010 Winter Olympics and is one of the world's most exclusive ski resorts. With a permanent population of just under 10,000 residents, Whistler has a large second home market. Whistler's residential market suffered during the global economic downturn as US buyers, historically a key purchaser group, were put off by a strong Canadian dollar.

In contrast to nearby Vancouver, prices in Whistler last peaked in 2008, falling by around 25% to a low in 2012. Values have since recovered, with sales volumes seeing a marked increase in the last year, but remain a third off their 2007 high.

The majority of home buyers in Whistler are Canadian, many hailing from neighbouring Vancouver. At the very top tiers of the market, buyers from the US, Europe, Asia and Russia are present in small numbers.

Challenges and opportunities

The North American market faces challenges. The US is host to 470 ski areas, down from more than 700 in the 1980s. The ski markets are highly domestic, and in spite of a huge population, the US participation rate is low (estimated at between 3% and 4%). This makes it particularly susceptible to changes in ski habits at a national level.

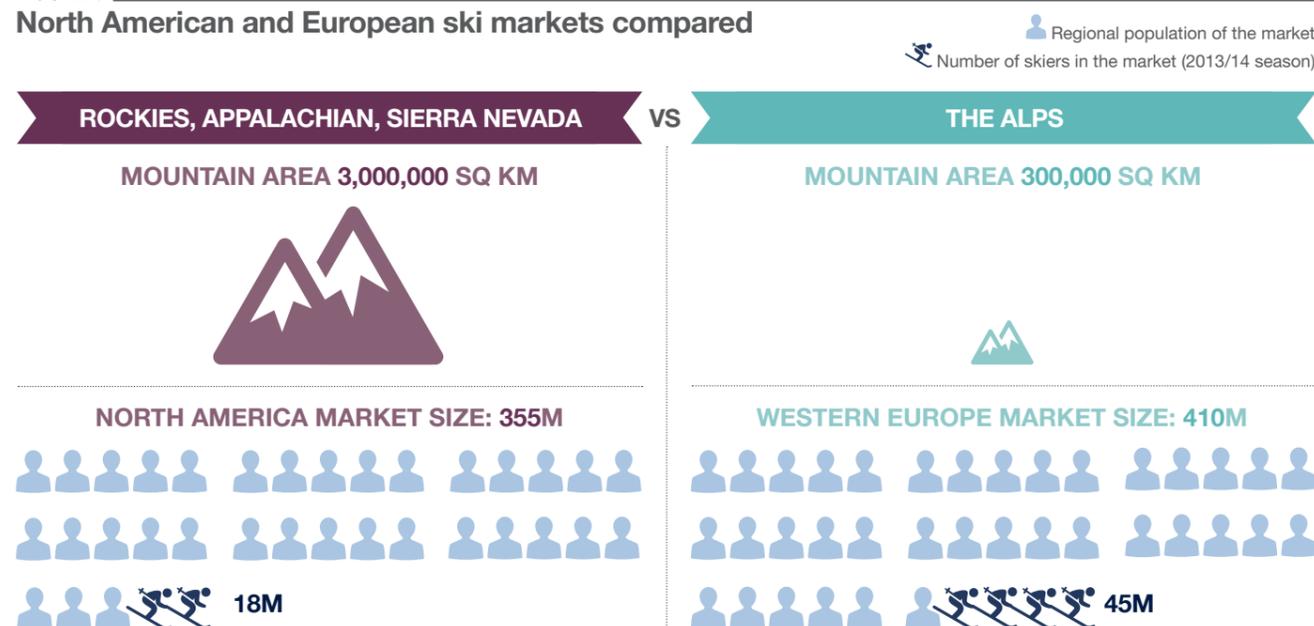
The USA and Canada's resorts are spread over three main mountain ranges (The Rockies, Appalachian and Sierra Nevada) which together cover a total area of more than 3 million sq km. By contrast the Alps are 1/10th of the size, but host to more ski resorts than in any other part of the world. Closely packed and often interlinked, resorts in the Alps benefit from a position at the heart of densely populated Europe.

From a real estate perspective there are opportunities. US ski resorts are poised to benefit from a spill-over of demand after strong recovery in the residential markets of US cities. Land is more readily available than in tightly packed European resorts. North America (notably the US) is home to the largest number of wealthy individuals globally, so with the right product there remains a ready demand base to tap in the home market. ■

“Prices are still below their 2007 high, but recovery has been driven by the top end of the market”

\$500m
The amount invested in improvements by Vail Resorts over the last five years

FIGURE 9 North American and European ski markets compared



Source: Savills World Research

SKI MARKETS TO WATCH

THE BALKANS



The ski resorts of the Balkans are opening up to a global audience, having attracted western tour operators in recent years. Kopaonik in Serbia has a reputation for ski-in-ski-out properties, and attracts domestic, British and Russian skiers. A candidate for EU membership, foreigners may purchase freely in Serbia under a reciprocal agreement. In Bulgaria, Bansko offers access to Pirin National Park, a UNESCO world heritage site, while Borovets has been established as a winter resort since 1896.

NISEKO JAPAN



Niseko is one of Asia's most important ski resorts. Located in Hokkaido, it is famous for plentiful powder snow and the iconic Mount Yotei. This valley resort is internationally recognised as a world-class ski destination, and as such draws visitors from across Pacific Asia and beyond. Niseko has an established luxury residential market, supported by those from China, Singapore, Malaysia and Korea, as well as domestic demand.

The established Alpine resorts of France, Switzerland and Austria are the most visited globally. We examine the future competition in the form of emerging destinations and resorts opening up to an international market.

LAS LENAS ARGENTINA



Las Lenas, Argentina, is an emerging luxury ski resort at high elevation in the Andes. Infrastructure in the resort is more limited than some of those established ski destinations in the northern hemisphere and as a consequence, it is Mendoza, the resort's gateway city, that has attracted the lion's share of (mainly domestic) wealthy investors. Mendoza also benefits from proximity to the vineyards of Chacras de Coria and Maipo.

PYEONGCHANG SOUTH KOREA



Pyeongchang is the 2018 host for the Winter Olympics. Located in the Taebaek Mountains, it comprises several resorts, of which Yongpyong is the largest and a two hour drive from Seoul. Neighbouring Alpensia is a new resort and will be home to the athlete's village and ski jumping stadium. Pyeongchang has long been the haunt of Korea's high-society. International investors have been attracted by special visa investor programmes.

CHINA



As an emerging ski market, 80% of the ski business in China is for beginners. This is reflected in the profile of the 350 ski areas in China, the majority of which are ski fields for learning. Only a handful of resorts are approaching Western standards. The sport is still nascent (and considered 'play' by many Chinese), but a growing number of young, wealthy Chinese are taking it up. China's hosting of the 2022 Winter Olympics should further broaden its appeal. Yabuli in the north of China is the country's largest resort and the training venue for the national teams relative to other Alpine markets.

80%
of China's ski market
is for beginners

2018
Winter Olympics to
be held in Pyeongchang

1896
Borovets in Bulgaria
established as
a winter resort

"The ski resorts in the Balkans are opening up to a global audience having attracted western tour operators in recent years"

Savills World Research

International Residential

Based in Margaret Street in London's West End, the International Residential Department provides an extensive range of property services for international property owners and developers:

Consultancy: Market research, concept development, urban and resort master planning, financial investment and structuring, programme management coordination, branding, sales and marketing services.

Agency: Development sales and market services for international developments and resorts. This includes both on-site and off-site sales operations and global sales road-shows. Our Alpine Homes Division is a leading specialist in the sale of ski property in the Alps.

Network: Individual and multi-unit property sales services through an international network of Savills and associate offices around the world. We also offer a bespoke off-market property sales service.

Research: Knowledge of both local and international market dynamics, through Savills' global presence and research capabilities. Includes regular reporting on local market conditions and research reports tailored to clients' specific requirements.

About Alpine Homes

Alpine Homes International is a leading Ski Property Agency, based in Switzerland. Founded in 2005, Alpine Homes specialises in the sale of off plan and resale property in Switzerland, France, Austria and Italy. We offer a broad range of property services to developers and property owners alike, including development consultancy, valuation, brokerage and rental introductions. Our qualified, multilingual staff are passionate about ski property and The Alps and we strive to offer the highest standards of client care.

Alpine Homes is proud to be an International associate of Savills plc.

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Savills plc

Savills is a leading global real estate service provider listed on the London Stock Exchange. The company established in 1855, has a rich heritage with unrivalled growth. It is a company that leads rather than follows, and now has over 600 offices and associates throughout the Americas, Europe, Asia Pacific, Africa and the Middle East.

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