

CELEBRATING LIFE IN THE COUNTRY

WILDFLOWER

AUTUMN 2025
ISSUE 23
£6.95

COUNTRY COTTAGE STYLE

COLOURFUL KITCHENS
DECORATE WITH TEXTILES
TALES FROM A WALLED GARDEN

CREATIVE WORKSHOPS

THE ART OF BLOCK PRINTING
HOW TO DRY FLOWERS
FOREST FORAGING

FEASTS FROM THE FARM

HEARTY RECIPES TO
TRY AT HOME

CONNECTING WITH NATURE

LYDIA MILLEN'S JOURNEY
THROUGH THE SEASONS

FIND YOUR HAPPY PLACE

A HEALING RETREAT IN
THE WELSH HILLS

Be inspired by
AUTUMN



LIVE | EXPLORE | GROW | ESCAPE





Alpine ADVENTURE

Zoë Levey travelled to Val d'Isère with Purple Ski to hit the slopes in style...

WORDS BY ZOË LEVEY

Picture-perfect Val d'Isère in the northern French Alps enjoys a reputation as one of the world's finest ski resorts. With over 300km of piste-skiing and plenty of additional off-piste powder fields, combined with some of the most reliable snowfalls in the region, the Val d'Isère – Tignes ski area (formerly Espace Killy) is an alpine playpark for skiers and snowboarders alike. Visitors flock here for an extended ski season which runs from November right through to the end of May to make the most of the pristine slopes and enjoy the lively après-ski social scene that has inevitably sprung up. The resort is popular with seasoned skiers, but it's also a good choice for beginners and families too.

I checked into Purple Ski's first luxury

catered chalet in Val d'Isère – Chalet Machapuchare, located in the exclusive Le Crêt area of the village. It's easy to see why Chalet Machapuchare was awarded the Best Chalet in France at the 2023 and 2024 World Ski Awards, the most prestigious awards programme in the ski tourism industry. Named after a Nepalese sacred mountain and sleeping up to 15 guests in 7 en-suite bedrooms, Chalet Machapuchare is the passion project of Yoann Marchand and his wife Charlotte Guilhamat, who built the property from scratch in 2014 and have since overseen every delightful detail within. A ski instructor and self-confessed design enthusiast, Yoann grew up in Val d'Isère and everywhere within Chalet Machapuchare you can see influences from his family's long connection with the area. Propped with handcrafted and recycled >

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT:

Chalet Machapuchare is set in the exclusive Le Crêt area, with uninterrupted views of the valley; the chalet, completed in 2018, sleeps up to 15 guests; interiors focus on natural materials including wood, stone and leather; the hot tub has one of the best views from its spot on the wraparound balcony



VAL D'ISÈRE NOTEBOOK

BOOK LESSONS with the friendly team at Oxygène who offer expert private child or adult ski or snowboard sessions taught in English, plus instruction and coaching, off-piste guided tours and excellent equipment hire. oxyvaene.ski

TAKE IN THE incredible views from the top of the mountain over a satisfying lunch at Refuge de Solaise. Try authentic Savoyard dishes such as tartiflette au reblochon paired with a glass of local wine or share poulet rôti aux morilles for a hearty feast. lerefuge-valdisere.com

DANCE THE NIGHT away at renowned hotspot La Baraque in Val d'Isère's town centre where live bands perform nightly to an enthusiastic crowd. restolabaraque.com

WARM UP TIRED muscles and relax post-ski with a luxurious full body massage courtesy of mobile therapists Massage Me. massage-me.com

TAKE A BREAK from skiing and discover the resort via snowy trails on an exhilarating escorted electric bike ride with family-run business Wattsup Fatbike. wattsupfatbike.com

It's undoubtedly luxurious, and a manifestation of Yoann's commitment to design excellence

artefacts, quirky 'objets' such as vintage ski boots and ancient skis, and old family pictures adorning the walls, the chalet is full of alpine charm. It's undoubtedly luxurious, and a manifestation of Yoann's commitment to design excellence and delivering on the details.

And it's certainly ambitious. Guests are chauffeur driven to the chalet and arrive in the underground car park – a James Bond-style lair with exposed rock which immediately provides a talking point. From there, guests are welcomed into the retro-style panelled Ski Room, where experts from Oxygène arrive to kit everyone out with skis and boots enabling a prompt start the next day's skiing. The 'wow' factor continues when you see the indoor lap pool with its gently splashing waterfall and a 'living wall' adding tropical glamour to the space. There's also a massage room for a post-ski rub-down, a state-of-the-art gym for those with extra energy, an indoor sound-proofed cinema room, and best of all – an outdoor jacuzzi with incredible views of the snow-capped

peaks and village of Val d'Isère beyond. Panoramic views greet guests in the open plan double-height living space where a central wood-burning fireplace keeps things cosy. A well-stocked bar is open all hours for an après-ski pick-me-up. All drinks are included as part of Purple Ski's offering – you just let them know your favourite tippie beforehand and they'll make sure it's there. And dining becomes a gourmet experience, with resident chef Hugo Attou preparing exquisite dishes that are equally refined as they are hearty and filling after a long day on the slopes.

With all of this on tap, it's tempting to stay indoors and indulge in Chalet Machapuchare's generous hospitality. But when you're ready to venture out onto the slopes or enjoy Val d'Isère's buzzing nightlife and restaurant scene, Purple Ski's chauffeur service provides a smooth transfer into the village, which is just a three-minute car ride away. They'll also organise ski lessons, make restaurant reservations, arrange childcare and recommend other fun activities to try during your stay. So all that's left is for you to do is focus on perfecting those parallel turns. *wf*

A seven-night stay at Chalet Machapuchare, Val d'Isère starts from €55,790 (£47,739) on a catered basis. purpleski.com

PHOTOGRAPHY © PURPLE SKI

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: The double-height sitting room serves as a focal point; guests refuel in the large dining area; the chalet's lap pool comes complete with tropical wall; views of the snow-capped peaks are far-reaching; the chalet has a super-convenient ski storage room; cocktails on tap; the attention to detail is a real highlight