

UPDATED: Italian Ski Breaks

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From £845

Intro / Intro Plus

Cross country skiing in Italy: it's the perfect winter get away. Think cross country, cappuccino, and comfort!

Learn how to cross country ski (also known as a Nordic ski) 'classic' style on groomed trails. You do not have to be an 'athlete' to enjoy it but it is a great way to improve fitness whilst enjoy the mountains in winter. This trip is suitable for complete beginners, those wishing to refresh their skills.

[Cogne](#), our base for this trip, is known as the 'Queen of Cross Country' in Italy. This picturesque location offers first class skiing away from the crowds in the heart of the Gran Paradiso National park (home to Italy's highest peak). With its typical stone-house village and eighteenth-century chapel, the area is steeped in history. Join one of our small cross country ski groups with a carefully chosen instructor who is truly passionate about the sport.

Receive [first class tuition](#) from our instructors. We only work with small groups to ensure that to ensure that you gain the most out your lessons.

- NEW for 2018 centrally located 3* Hotel & Spa
- Professional ski instruction
- NEW: INTRODUCTORY or INTRO PLUS LEVEL
- Ski in Italy's 'Grand Paradiso' National Park
- Airport transfers to and from Geneva included
- Ski in a remote Italian valley away from the crowds
- Flexible ski day
- True Italian hospitality with good food high on the agenda
- Reduced price option for 'locals' joining on Day 2

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[Departures](#)

Cross country skiing is the oldest form of skiing. No matter what your age you can still learn to cross country ski. The word 'ski' is a Norwegian word which comes from the Old Norse word 'skid', a split length of wood. Cross country skis are slender, very lightweight made of composite plastics and very easy to use. For centuries in the snow-covered Nordic countries, skis were a vital invention to enable hunting, collection of fire wood and to keep social contact between rural communities.

This trip will teach you the basic classic technique of diagonal stride on flat or slightly undulating ground so that you can propel yourself forwards across the snow in the most efficient way. Once mastered we will progress to longer journeys at the pace that is right for you. Cross country skiing can be, if you want it to be, a very aerobic activity, which makes it an ideal activity for winter 'cross-training' or you can take your time and just enjoy being out in the mountains.

We base these weekends in the small historic mountain town of Cogne - the nordic skiing 'pearl' of the Grand Paradiso National Park. Some 80km's of ski trails across 12 circuits makes Cogne the perfect nordic ski location in the heart of the Italian Alps. Experience skiing leisurely on freshly prepared ski trails through silent forests, by streams, passing frozen waterfalls with the chance to spot wildlife amongst unforgettable alpine scenery.

The Grand Paradiso National Park was created in 1922 when King Victor - Emmanuel III of Savoy donated his legendary game reserve to the nation. It is Italy's oldest national park and home to hundreds of protected species of animals and extremely rare plants and flowers all of which coexist in this protected area in one of the most beautiful areas of the Alps.

[Cross Country Skiing Italian Alps](#) Day 1 Arrival Geneva, Switzerland

We begin at Geneva airport where you will meet our private minibus transfer to [Cogne](#), in Italy. The departure to Cogne will be at 1630 hrs to allow us to arrive at your Italian hotel in time for dinner. The drive takes approximately 2 hrs initially along the Autoroute Blanche with views of Mont Blanc to reach Chamonix and access the Mont Blanc tunnel and Italy. At Aosta we join the final mountain road that lead us up into the Val di Cogne and the Gran Paradiso National park. Our accommodation *NEW for winter 2018* is the [Hotel & Spa du Gran Paradis](#) it's centrally located close to the shops, cafes, ski tracks and ski hire.

For flights that arrive earlier in the day then please see our notes below under 'Getting There'. Your ski instructor will meet you at your hotel this evening and brief you on the days ahead. Your ski rental equipment will be ready for you to collect from the hotel.

If you live locally there is the option of a reduced price. Please ask for details.

Day 2 Introduction to 'cross country' and cappuccino!

Our hotel is located 5 minutes from the ski tracks! After fitting skis and taking time to find our 'ski-legs' your instructor will take you through various exercises as a way of introducing you to the techniques for 'classic style' cross country skiing and what we call a basic 'diagonal stride'. Cogne has an excellent 'stadium' offering beautifully groomed tracks in a large flat area. This perfect arena for learning to ski offers a range of trails suitable for every level of skier. Lunch will be at a local restaurant or cafe. In the afternoon we will go back to our skis for further practice consolidating what we have learnt with options to make some short journeys.

It's not all about the skiing! After a day on the ski trails there will still be time to explore the shops, bars for a pre-dinner *apéro* or relax in the hotel wellness '[Spa La Baita](#)'. Post ski massages can be booked directly with the hotel.

Day 3 Building on your skills

Be inspired to ski! With its 80km's of ski trails many regional and national [cross country ski competitions](#) like the [Marcia Gran Paradiso](#) take place in the Cogne valley. The trails are flat or gently undulating and are the perfect training ground for beginners and racers alike.

The free ski bus means we can explore slightly further a field today by starting in one of the neighbouring villages such as Epinel or Lillaz. After we warm back up and review and practice our new found skills from yesterday we can make a short tour to reach our lunch venue. Always keeping the enjoyment factor high and the fear factor low it is our instructors aim to ensure that you progress each day at 'your' level.

Our afternoon will be spent adapting our basic diagonal stride for different types of terrain. There will be plenty of opportunities for learning new skills or practising along the way.

Day 4 Valnontey Day Tour

Today we plan to put all our skills into practice and make a longer tour that can be adapted to suit all levels reached so far. Our aim is to ski to the delightful upper valley of Valnontey. This snow filled valley is famous for [ice climbing](#) and it's possible to see ice climbers tackling the spectacular frozen waterfalls that line the valley on both sides. We will stop for lunch at the charming family run Albergo of [La Barme](#)

. Think heavy stone tiles on the roof, ancient woodwork, and a tiny hamlet of old wooden houses.

After lunch we tour further on undulating trails by the rivers edge to the head of the valley. It's often possible to spot ibex and chamois on the valleys slopes and in the woods close to the trails. Our return journey includes some enjoyable downhill sections which can again be adapted or avoided(!) to suit!

A final Italian meal and over night concludes this Italian Ski Break where we hope you have enjoyed exploring both the joy of cross country skiing and the charm of the Italian Alps.

Day 5 Departure Day

Today is departure day and your private minibus transfer will collect you after an early breakfast from your hotel to take you to Geneva airport. You will arrive by 1000 hrs to allow you to catch your flights home. We have chosen a Sunday for departure to avoid Geneva week-day rush hour and to minimise any chance of traffic delays.

Price

Included: The price includes half-board accommodation for 4 nights, based on two people sharing in a 3* hotel. Use of the hotel Spa la Baita (jacuzzi, steam bath, sauna, relax area etc) with bathrobe, towels and slippers included during your stay. 4 Course evening meal with a selection of typical Italian dishes at the Hotel Sant'Orso. A card for discounts in shops, ski rental and restaurants. 3 Full days of classic style cross country instruction by a fully qualified and

experienced BASI Nordic Instructor or equivalent. Transport between the ski venues, and Geneva airport transfer between your hotel on your arrival and departure days is also included. Single rooms can be booked for an additional fee.

Not included: Insurance, flights, lunches and drinks, massages, ski hire (approximately 40 Euros for the 3 days) and ski passes (approximately 24 Euros for 3 days).

Minimum Numbers

This trip requires a minimum of 4 clients to run. We will take a maximum of 8 clients.

Cogne Accommodation

Cogne is a small town equipped with all the facilities you might need for this trip including; a pharmacy, banks/ATMs, small supermarket, sports shops, tourist office, local produce, souvenirs, bars and cafes. Situated in the heart of the old town our accommodation is perfectly situated to easily access the ski trails, free bus to neighbouring villages, shops and bars. For winter 2018 we be staying at the family run, 19th century

[Hotel du Gran Paradis](#), making it Cogne's oldest hotel. It boasts traditional architecture, local Italian cuisine all in a relaxed alpine setting. Make yourself at home with access to their living room with fireplace, little bibliothèque, bar, heated ski room plus it has a small private wellness [Spa La Baita](#). Massages and single room requests are possible but do incur an additional fee.

[Hotel Gran Paradis](#) **Getting there**

For convenience we have included a transfer from Geneva airport, in Switzerland direct to Cogne. Although the local Italian airports of Milan and Turin are also only a few hours away from Cogne the flights are limited in comparison to Geneva which has a huge range of airlines with daily scheduled flights at relatively low cost. Geneva is also only a 2 hour drive to Cogne taking a beautiful route through the mountains. Our departure/pick up time from Geneva airport is scheduled for 16h30, however, once we have all the guest arrival times we may bring this forward if it suits all the other members of the group.

If your flight arrives earlier in the day you can use the time to explore Geneva. The return transfer will leave Cogne at approximately 07h00 in order to meet flights leaving Geneva from 11h30.

If you are booking onto a combined Italian Ski Break and Snowshoe Long Weekend then both your transfer to and from the airport will be included in the trip price.

It is important that you inform us of your flight times as soon as possible after booking.

Early Arrivals - Time in Geneva

Geneva airport is just 4 km's away from Geneva city centre. It is easily reached by train or bus using the united network of public transport

Unireso. You can pick up a free ticket for public transport from the machine in the baggage

collection area at the airport arrivals. It gives free transport for a period of 80 minutes. Only one single ticket is required to travel by train, tram, bus or boat in the area France-Vaud-Geneva. It only takes 6 minutes from/to Geneva city centre by train (every 12 minutes at rush hours). All trains stop at Geneva-Cornavin station (city centre). The buses stop every 8-15 minutes at rush hours at the airport (bus stops at the Check-in level, in front of or beside the train station). Full details can be found [here](#).

Left luggage lockers at Geneva

There are two left luggage facilities, both in the Railway Station which is attached to the airport building. The office beside the CFF/SBB counter takes luggage of all dimensions for a fee of CHF10 per day per item. It is open 7 days a week from 07h30 to 20h15. The automatic lockers are in front of the CFF/SBB counter and just behind the Chicorée Shop and come in 3 sizes (245mm x 420mm x 765mm / 350mm x 600mm x 770mm / 445mm x 610mm x 895mm); they are accessible from 05h00 to 23h50. The cost is from 6-9 CHF per day depending on the size.

Insurance

Please ensure that you must have the appropriate insurance for your chosen activity. You must be covered for helicopter rescue, repatriation and medical costs. With regard to this requirement please be sure you have read the Insurance section in our [Terms and Conditions](#).

Further Information

Upon booking a full list of the necessary suitable clothing will be provided. This itinerary is dependent on the weather and snow conditions at the time therefore changes to the itinerary may occur if necessary.

Previous cross country or alpine ski experience is an advantage, but not at all necessary. Your instructor will offer structured 'on snow' time for about 4-5 hours per day. We roughly break the days down to a morning skills session, then a rest, further developing travelling skills to lunch and then an afternoon session all of which is easily accompanied with a cappuccino or hot chocolate break!

Ski Rental

The cross country skiing equipment includes lightweight track fishscale classic skis (not skate skis or waxables), Salomon (or similar) boots, bindings and poles. Your instructor will collect your ski equipment, and deliver it to your hotel in Italy. We choose to hire out with Cogne valley as the ski

hire equipment is superior to that available locally. For this reason we ask you to be precise about your sizes when completing your booking form. If for any reason the boots provided are not a good fit, then there is a small hire shop in Cogne itself where you will be able to hire additional boots if really necessary. The total ski hire for the weekend is expected to be 40 Euros per person. We ask that you pay this sum direct to your ski instructor on the first evening in cash Euros.

Ski equipment hire is arranged in advance. Please make note of your equipment hire on our booking form. We will need to know your height, weight, normal shoe size (you must give us your everyday shoe size and not your personal adjustment for wearing boots) and the measurement of your height up to your armpits (for ski pole hire).

Our Partners

As our niche trips such as our Italian Ski Breaks are of a specialised nature we work with our partner companies to attract sufficient clients to reach the minimum number of participants to allow these trips to go ahead, meaning you are more likely to have your chosen holiday 'guaranteed'. If you have any queries with regard to this please contact us.

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Fabulous
Cogne!