

# HOW I FOUND MY INNER SKI BUM

**Amy Dawson** goes to Morzine for the best new Alpine après-ski activities

**P**ADDED impact shorts. Padded. Impact. Shorts. Right now, I can't think of a more thrilling trio of letter-clusters in the English language. Sadly for me, I'm hearing only too late that these enchanted garments exist. After swapping my trusty skis for a beginner's snowboard, and spending the majority of the day slamming into the snow, I already have a liquorice-coloured bruise the size of a cricket ball on my bum. Sitting down won't be happening tonight.

Luckily there's oodles to distract me in the form of après-ski at the revamped La Kinkerne bar and hotel in Morzine, France, which has a party vibe I'd probably have to dub 'future oompah'.

It's one of three Morzine properties to have recently been slickly done up and rebooted by Rude Chalets and Adventure Base, two popular and good-value stalwarts of the winter holiday scene that have joined forces to create bargain party-heavy breaks.

Sipping from a stein of beer that's so enormous it's hard to hold steady with just one hand, I watch a boisterous crowd dancing against an apricot sunset on sturdy wooden tables installed specifically for that purpose. Unavoidably and handily located at the bottom of the Prodains



**R&R:** La Kinkerne hotel bar, one of its dorms and a typical serving of Alpine goodness to keep you going



From £295 for three days, incl Easyjet flights to Geneva, lift passes and transfers, [adventurebase.com](http://adventurebase.com)

ski lift, La Kinkerne is set to offer daily live 'traditional' bands as they compete with the famously wild Austrian scene for sundown frolics. The staff are dressed in lederhosen and dirndls – that's an Alpine peasant dress, should you not be up on this sort of thing.

Stomachs rumbling after a long day on the slopes – or, in my case, on the floor – we head inside to share hearty plates of schnitzel, sausage, at least three different types of potato and, of course, lots more beer. The two companies are also relaunching

the newly spruced Rude Lodge ([rudechalets.com](http://rudechalets.com)), complete with a top-notch French-American steakhouse-style restaurant called La Coupe. Right next door is the much-loved den of iniquity known as Le Paradis nightclub.

Food, booze, club and bed – all your winter holiday bases covered without any need to tramp through the dark on slippery ice after one too many shots of génépi. If there is a god of

## MUSIC ON THE MOUNT

For those with a Portes du Soleil ski pass, Morzine plays host to a free week-long music festival each March. Rock The Pistes sees open-air gigs on the slopes that are only accessible by ski, with après-ski gigs down in the resort villages every night. Line-ups usually involve a healthy balance of French and international artists, with Two Door Cinema Club set to be 2016's big draw.

Mar 13-19, free with ski pass, [rockthepistes.com](http://rockthepistes.com)



après-ski, he is smiling on us here in Morzine.

There are 37 beds at the lodge, most in the form of hostel dorms, which means it's basic but clean and a total bargain. And the Rude Café downstairs is always stuffed with friendly seasonaires (the workers who live in the resort all season), ready with invaluable tips.

Here I'm told that I should say I've been 'riding' because only dorks say 'boarding'. Inevitably,

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Salut! Amy (left) and pal test their drinking arms



Gently does it: A rare upright moment for novice snowboarder Amy



Local: Rude Café is a seasonaire hangout

**Food, booze, club and bed - all your winter holiday bases covered**

I spend the entire holiday saying I've been boarding.

We feast on a lush meal in La Coupe, cosy with its copper lamps and stag heads on the stone walls, before toddling next door to check out

the Le Paradis relaunch party. A famously eccentric joint previously run by an ex-Moulin Rouge dancer, Le Paradis has returned as a tiki-style bar complete with cocktails, hula garlands and a giant kaleidoscopic snake flashing on the wall.

As a fan of a seedy, lit-up dance floor, I'm gutted to find Le Paradis has got rid of theirs but instead there are two poles (one of which spins) to dance around. Given the amount of house red I've consumed, I'm not giving them a go. At least, not until I can find some of those shorts.

**DON'T STOP THE PARTY**

APRÈS-SKI mecca Portes du Soleil, which consists of 13 resorts between Switzerland's Lake Geneva and France's Mont Blanc, has one of the biggest winter dance scenes around.

**SNOWBOXX**

This dance-heavy festival moves from its previous home in Andorra to set up an entire party village in Portes du Soleil this year, promising pool parties, igloo raves, massive après terraces and more. Running concurrently with Rock The Pistes (see left), headliners include drum'n'bass duo Sigma, former Streets man Mike Skinner and grime talent Stormzy (above).



Avoriaz, Mar 12 to 19, tickets from £239, snowboxx.com

**TRANSITION**

Aimed squarely at the student market, this festival from the people behind Snowbombing launched last December with a line-up headed up by Dizzee Rascal (right). Dates and acts are yet to be announced for this year but last year packages started at £99 for six nights' accommodation and a festival wristband. Avoriaz, date and price tbc. transitionsnow.com



**IGLOO MUSIC CONTEST**

With a bonkers ice carvings grotto, two ice bars, a restaurant and even a quirky hotel, the Avoriaz igloo village is always fun for a visit. This winter they'll also be picking new DJ talent to battle it out on ice stages, gearing up for a grand finale in the spring. Free entry, various dates until April 10, village-igloo-avoriaz.fr



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