

Press release: 27th October 2009

snowcarbon launches to encourage train travel to ski resorts

snowcarbon is a new independent website about train travel to ski resorts. It explains exactly how to book rail journeys, how to get the best fares, and which resorts are easiest to reach by train.

The site, www.snowcarbon.co.uk, which has been set up by two respected travel journalists, fills a vital gap. Until the launch of snowcarbon, there was no single source of information about rail travel to ski resorts.

With a clean, simple design, snowcarbon features 30 resorts across Europe, from Andorra to Austria, including France, Italy and Switzerland, all of which can be conveniently reached by train.

snowcarbon features independent resort reviews written by leading ski journalists, a sophisticated Resort Finder and unique email alerts that send users an email reminder on the day that lowest fares are available for their journey.

The site aims to encourage skiers and snowboarders to abandon increasingly expensive and stressful journeys by air in favour of far more enjoyable, low-carbon journeys by train. The environmental benefits are huge: the carbon footprint of a trip by plane to a ski resort is typically 8-10 times greater than the equivalent rail journey.

Travelling by train from the UK to European ski resorts is comfortable and stress-free. Couples, groups and families love the space and freedom on board, and children under four travel free. With lakes and mountains, the scenery is spectacular and by travelling overnight in couchette accommodation, skiers can get two extra days on the slopes.

Many resorts have mainline railway stations – including St Moritz in Switzerland, St Anton in Austria and Chamonix in France – so the transfer from train to ski accommodation takes only a few minutes. Some resorts can be reached directly from London without a change of train, including Tignes, Meribel and Courchevel.

Surveys suggest that skiers and snowboarders are keen to take the train, but don't have the necessary information or encouragement. A survey in 2005 by the Ski Club of Great Britain found that 68% of its members would prefer to travel to resorts by train.

If more skiers chose the train, the environmental benefits would be significant. According to a study by the Agence De l'Environnement et de la Maîtrise de l'Energie (a French government agency) and environmental ski charity Mountain Riders, 73% of a typical ski resort's carbon footprint is made up by the journeys of tourists take to get there.

Door-to-door journey comparison: London to Sauze d'Oulx, Italy

Flight: 10hrs. Leave home 3am, arrive resort 1pm (typical charter flight from Gatwick)

Train: 11hrs 30mins. Leave home 7.30am, arrive resort 7pm

Fare comparison: London to Sauze d'Oulx, Italy*

Flight: £217 (including train to Gatwick, minibus transfer to resort, luggage charges)

Train: £178 (including private taxi transfer to resort, Metro fare in Paris)

* booked 5 weeks in advance, including skis carriage

Carbon footprint comparison: London to Sauze d'Oulx, Italy

Flight: 96.8kg CO2

Train: 11.1kg CO2

Car: 227.1kg CO2 (per car, by Eurotunnel)

Other features on snowcarbon:

- How to change trains in Paris
- Private taxis that meet you on the platform can be pre-booked using a simple email form
- Guide on how to get the lowest fares (from £99 return)
- Guide on eating in Paris, including the famous restaurant, Le Train Bleu at Gare de Lyon
- Information about on-board restaurant dining (many European trains boast freshly-prepared gourmet meals)
- Guide to UK tour operators that feature rail-inclusive packages and give non-flight discounts
- Information and links for booking accommodation independently

About snowcarbon:

snowcarbon was conceived by Daniel Elkan, a ski writer who has spent five years researching rail journeys to ski resorts. His co-founder is Mark Hodson, a travel journalist and founder of www.101holidays.co.uk. For more about them and the site's expert ski writers, visit: www.snowcarbon.co.uk/about.

Further information:

For further information on snowcarbon, please visit us at www.snowcarbon.co.uk

For media information, images and ski press trips with snowcarbon, please contact: Susie Tempest, The Saltmarsh Partnership, email: susie@saltmarshpr.co.uk; tel: 020 7902 2793.