

Here's how to save your half-term family ski holiday

British families with fully vaccinated teenagers have the best chance of securing a hassle-free break

By Abigail Butcher, TRAVEL WRITER
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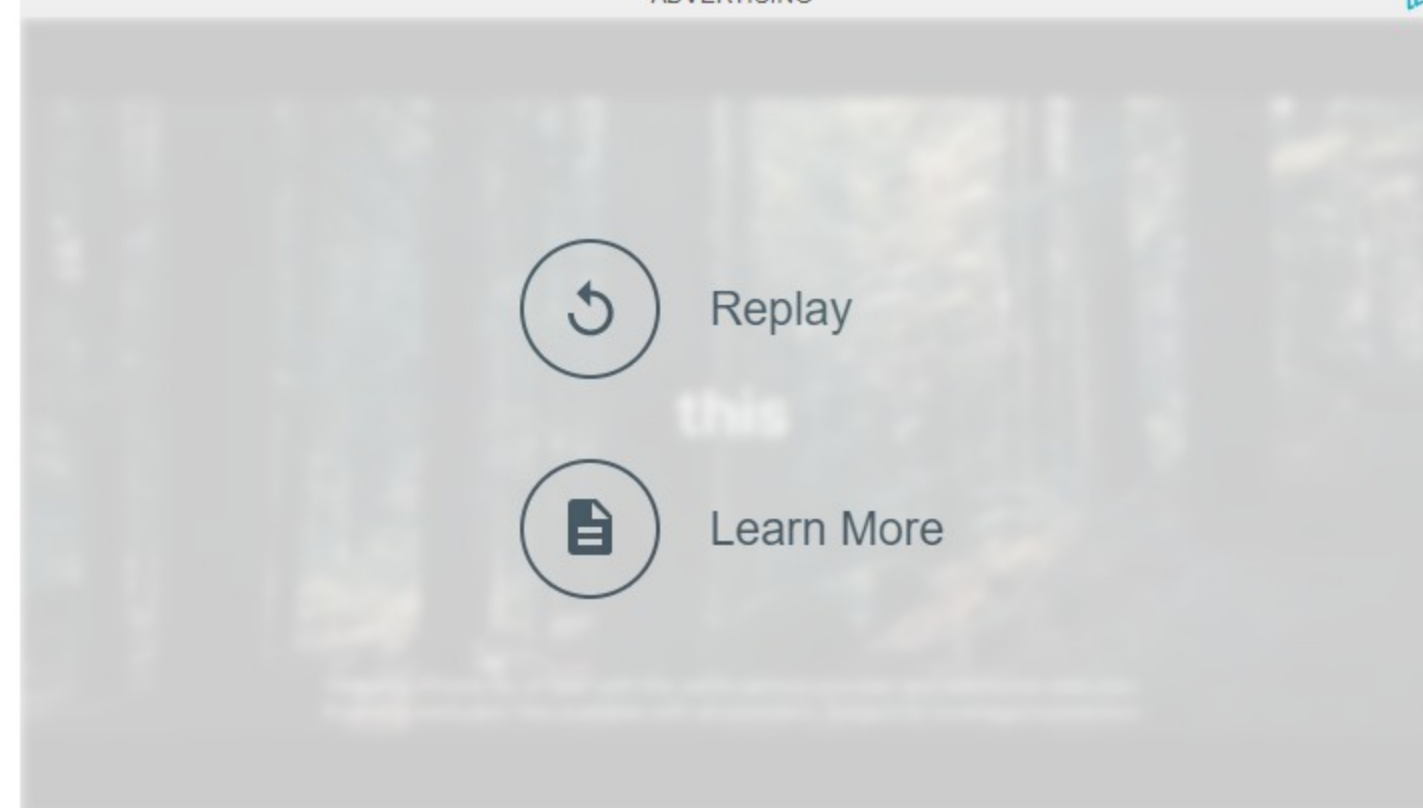


If your teenagers haven't been double-vaccinated or recovered from Covid in the past six months, options are more limited | CREDIT: Ross Woodhall/Alamy Source

British families hoping to take their teenagers skiing this winter are being urged to ensure they are fully vaccinated in order to hit the slopes, following the tightening of Covid restrictions across Europe.

The situation is fast-moving – as with all travel restrictions over the past two years – and as we write, although the French government has not confirmed exact rules for unvaccinated minors, we believe, despite tightened rules for adults, they can still be tested every 24 hours to prove negative Covid status in order to access ski lifts, restaurants and bars with a pass sanitaire.

Experts across the industry are scrambling for clarification, but, reassuringly, Craig Burton, managing director of Ski Solutions said: “While most families (travelling with us) with older teenagers are now fully vaccinated, there are still a number who are not – so this is good news for those with younger teens who might not have been able to get both jabs yet. With second jabs for 12 to 15 year-olds being administered in the UK now, it is a problem that eases with every week that goes by, and, as we move into the second half of the season, it will become less of an issue.”



That said, families are being urged to get their teenagers double-jabbed sooner rather than later to avoid getting left out in the cold or stung by testing costs in resorts – in order to be classified as fully vaccinated in many destinations a certain time frame needs to have passed since the second dose. “For any teens that are not yet fully vaccinated there is still time to get the second one in before a half-term ski holiday. It will make your holiday here run smoothly,” said Sara Burdon, head of communications in the French resort of Morzine.



Children aged 16 and under are exempt from health pass restrictions and can ski in Switzerland regardless of recovery and vaccination status | CREDIT: shenky/istockphoto

If your children haven't been double-jabbed or recovered from Covid in the past six months, there are still plenty of destinations to choose from.

Here's our lowdown on the best options for your family ski holiday this winter, whether your offspring are vaccinated or not.

Please note: The below details rules for children and teenagers in ski resorts. Many destinations require passengers of all ages to test before their departure – check border restrictions for your destination [here](#).

Skiing free from restrictions

Try: Switzerland, USA, Norway or Bulgaria

If you have young children, aged 11 and below, there are few barriers in ski resorts across the globe. Canada aside, children under 12 can ski free from restrictions across Europe and the USA, so long as they are with a fully vaccinated adult.



Children aged 11 and under are having an easier time accessing ski resorts without restrictions | CREDIT: Famvel/istockphoto

Children aged 16 and under are exempt from health pass restrictions and can ski in [Switzerland](#) regardless of recovery and vaccination status. The same age group faces few restrictions on the slopes in Norway and Bulgaria – though in these destinations, teenagers must travel with a fully vaccinated adult.

Unvaccinated children and teenagers aged 17 and under can ski unrestricted in many destinations in the USA, but if unvaccinated, those kids must take an antigen test between days three and five of their holiday once in resort. In some destinations owned by giant Vail Resorts, guests aged 12 and over are required to show proof of vaccinations to dine at indoor, on-mountain self-service restaurants – but the inoculation rules stop there.

Skiing with unvaccinated teens with no proof of recovery

Try: Austria or France

Things get a little more tricky in [Austria](#) and, as we understand it, in [France](#) – but it's still possible to take your family skiing if they haven't all been double-jabbed and don't have proof of recovery from the virus.

Austria has a “Ninja Pass” scheme requiring all unvaccinated or partially-vaccinated children aged 12 to 15 to take two antigen tests plus one PCR test during the course of a week's holiday in order to access the slopes. But the good news is that tests are free in ski resorts – so although it's onerous, there is no additional cost to parents.



Testing is a requirement for unvaccinated teenagers in Austrian resorts such as Ischgl, but at least it's free

In France, the new pass vaccinal comes into force later this week, replacing the pass sanitaire for anyone aged 16 and over. Under the new rules, skiers over the age of 16 must be fully vaccinated (with a booster if their second dose was more than seven months ago) or show a certificate of recovery (more than 11 days and less than six months old) to access bars, restaurants and public transport, including ski lifts; they will no longer be able to test to access these key services. From February 15, the rules on boosters change again, and they'll be required four months after a second vaccine dose. With British youngsters only just getting around to receiving their second dose, this will unlikely prove to be a problem for most families this season.

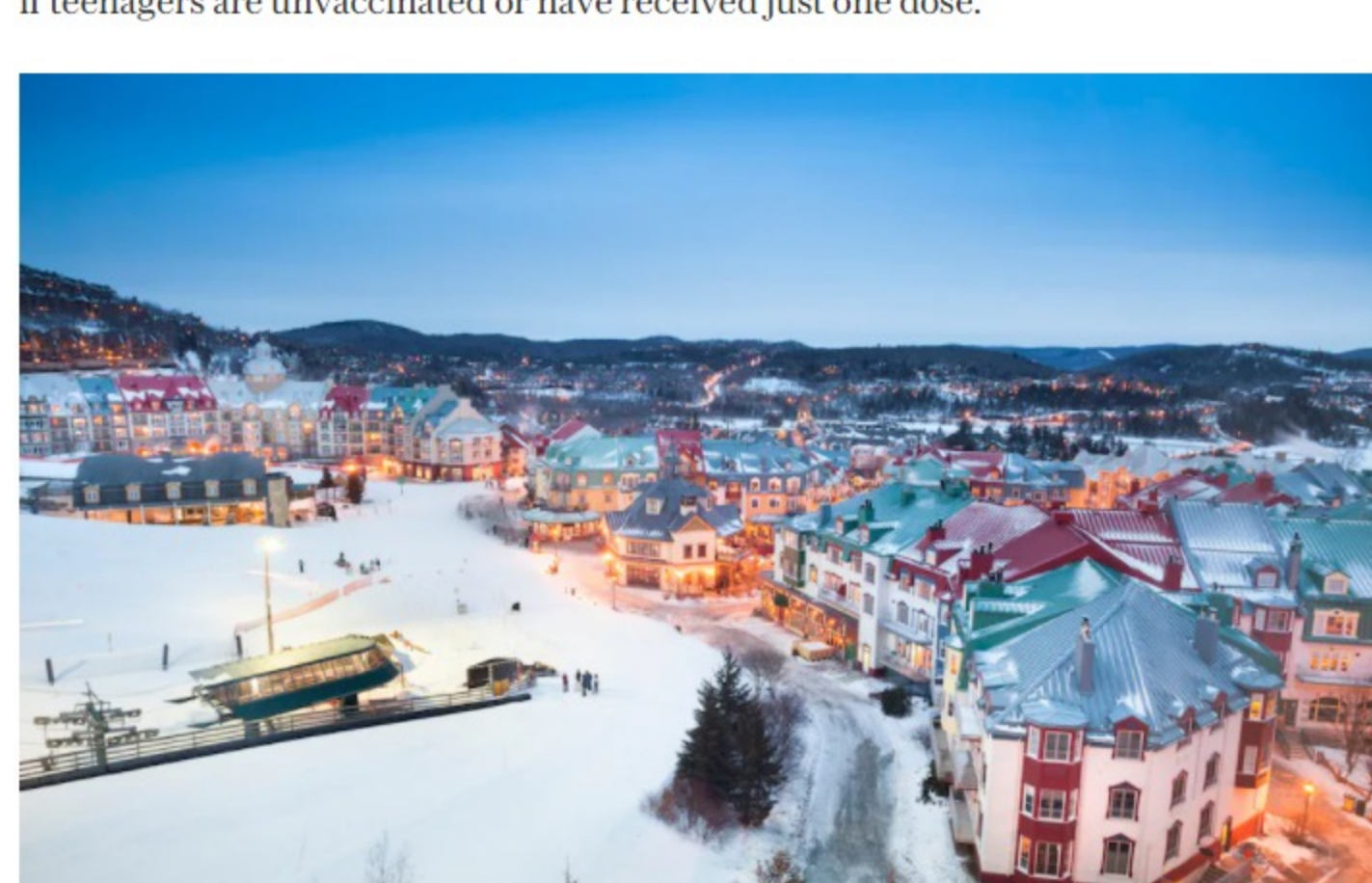
Despite reports yet to be confirmed, The Telegraph understands that minors aged 12 to 15 who are unvaccinated or have had just one jab will be subject to the same conditions as the existing pass sanitaire – meaning they will be able to show proof of recovery (as above) or undergo antigen testing every 24 hours while in resort. Tests cost between €25-40 in dedicated testing centres and pharmacies – [here's what it's like to get tested in a French ski resort this season](#).

Skiing with vaccinated teens or teens with proof of recovery

Try: Italy, Canada or Andorra

Almost all ski destinations are on the table for your family ski holiday if everyone is fully vaccinated – apart from Japan, which is still closed for non-essential travel.

On January 10, [Italy](#) changed its rules to a “Super Green Pass” system for anyone aged 12 and over. Under this system, only fully-vaccinated skiers or those with proof of recovery (within the previous 180 days) over the age of 12 can use ski lifts and go into bars and restaurants. There is no longer an option to test every 24 hours once in resort if teenagers are unvaccinated or have received just one dose.



Mont Tremblant village, Quebec: British children aged 12 and over must be double vaccinated to ski in Canada | CREDIT: pgnovt

Similarly in [Canada](#), children over 12 must be fully vaccinated – and any unvaccinated children aged 5-11 years in Canada must have proof of recovery from Covid between 14 and 180 days before departure.

In Andorra children aged 15 and under are exempt from Covid regulations in ski resorts, which includes proof of vaccination, recovery (in last six months) or a negative test to access the slopes. Travelling from the UK via Spain presents some difficulties, as anyone aged 12 and over must have been fully vaccinated to enter.

Half-term ski holidays to book now

Prices are per person based on a seven-night stay including half-board, flights and transfers, unless stated otherwise.

St Moritz, Switzerland

Ski Solutions (020 3627 1605; [skisolutions.com](#)) offers the Hotel Schweizerhof, centrally located with a rooftop spa, from £2,200pp departing February 12.

Borovets, Bulgaria

Crystal Ski Holidays (020 8610 3123, [crystalski.co.uk](#)) offers Hotel Samokov, with pool and an easy stroll to the gondola, from £1,142pp, departing February 12.

St Anton, Austria

SkiLine.co.uk (020 8313 3999; [skiline.co.uk](#)) offers four-star Chalet Cristal, five minutes' walk from the main lifts, from £1,949pp, departing February 12.

Norefjell, Norway

British Airways (0344 493 0125, [britishairways.com](#)) offers a B&B stay in the ski-in/ski-out Norefjell Ski & Spa, with a climbing wall and two restaurants, from £499pp, departing February 11, excluding transfers.

Les Deux Alpes, France

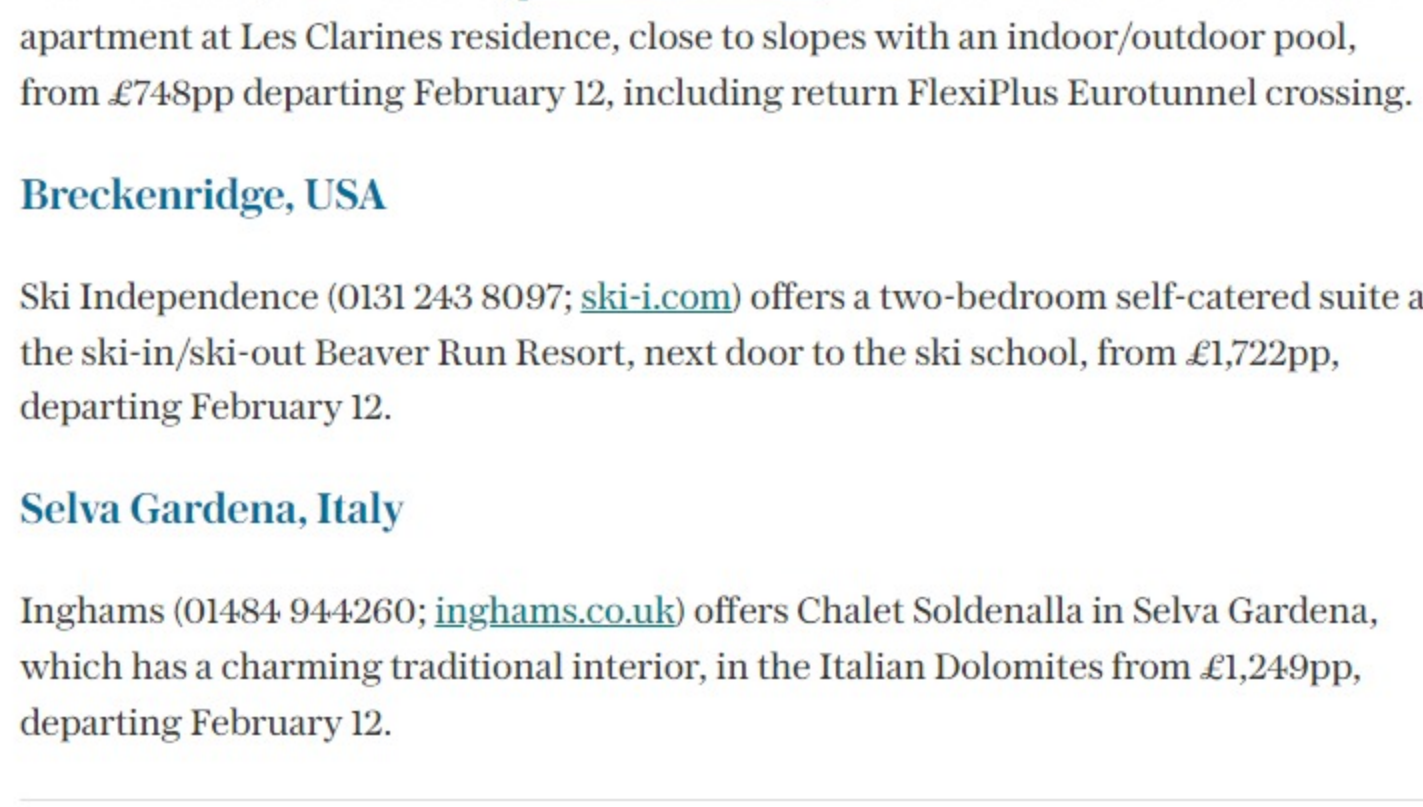
Peak Retreats (023 9283 9310; [peakretreats.co.uk](#)) offers a two-bedroom self-catered apartment at Les Clarines residence, close to slopes with an indoor/outdoor pool, from £748pp departing February 12, including return FlexiPlus Eurotunnel crossing.

Breckenridge, USA

Ski Independence (0131 243 8097; [ski-i.com](#)) offers a two-bedroom self-catered suite at the ski-in/ski-out Beaver Run Resort, next door to the ski school, from £1,722pp, departing February 12.

Selva Gardena, Italy

Inghams (01484 944260; [ingham.co.uk](#)) offers Chalet Soldenalla in Selva Gardena, which has a charming traditional interior, in the Italian Dolomites from £1,249pp, departing February 12.



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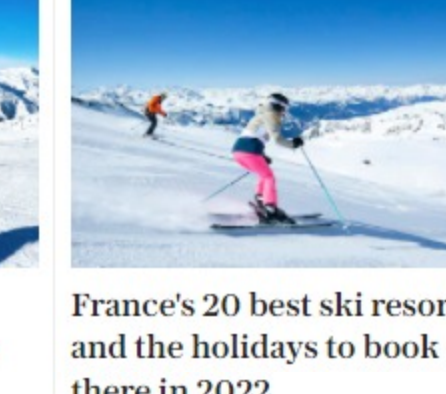
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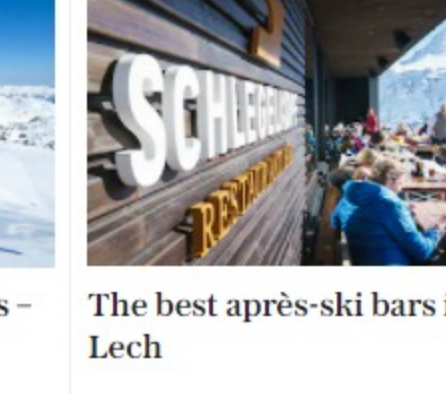
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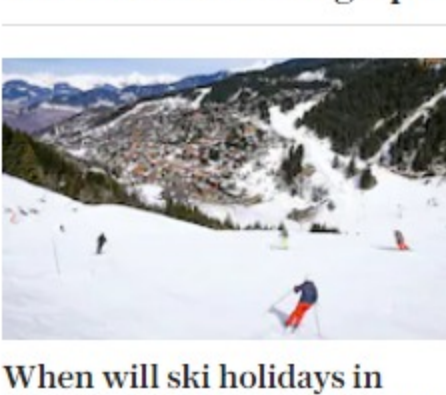


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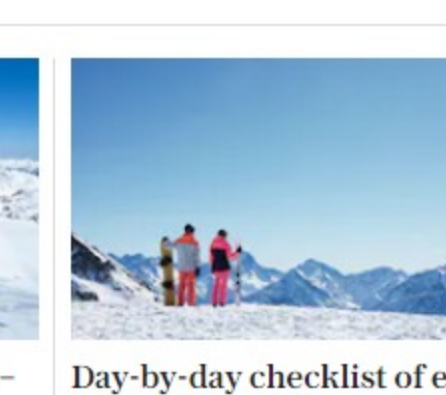
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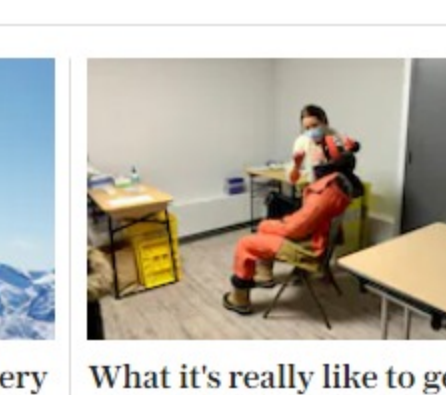
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