

GOOD THINGS COME IN SMALL PACKAGES

AS A SKI INSTRUCTOR BASED IN TIGNES, **TORI COLLINS** IS USED TO BUSY PISTES AND ALL THE THRILLS AND SPILLS OF SKIING THE HUGE ESPACE KILLY. FOR A CHANGE OF PACE ON DAYS OFF SHE HEADS TO NEARBY SAINTE FOY WITH HER 9-YEAR-OLD SON OSSIE. JUST A SHORT DRIVE FROM TIGNES/VAL D'ISERE IT COULD BE A WORLD AWAY WITH ITS PEACEFUL VILLAGE ATMOSPHERE AND TREE-LINED SLOPES. HERE, SHE LETS US IN ON THE BEST-KEPT SECRET IN THE TARENTOISE.



FOR CONFIDENT CHILDREN AND TEENAGERS

Older and more advanced skiers love Sainte Foy's secret forest ski trails, which all have animal names like Fox and Wolf. With rolling drop-offs, natural half-pipes and rock drops, they love using the natural shapes of the mountain like a giant snow park.

FOR IMPROVERS

The long, quiet blue runs are ideal for anyone wanting to improve their technique, giving you space to perfect your wide carved turns. The steeper, more technical and challenging red runs are excellent for practicing shorter turns and controlling your speed. Sainte Foy has a brilliant bumps piste right under L'Arpettaz chairlift as well as un-groomed black runs Crystal Dark, Morion, and Cret Serru du Haut. They're a great way of developing your skiing and preparing you to tackle more demanding terrain.

FOR OFF PISTE AND POWDER LOVERS

Sainte Foy may only have four chairlifts but it really is a huge north-facing, freeride paradise! Those who ski there usually keep it a secret because the lift queues are always short and the fresh tracks can last all day. For the bravest and most experienced you mustn't miss the famous Pointe de la Foglietta. The start is located at 3000m after three chairlifts and around an hour's hike and it really is one of the most beautiful north-face skis of the Tarentaise valley, offering a long downhill run of powder snow all winter.

Of course, if you're thinking of venturing off-piste it's important that you go with a guide and all the correct avalanche safety equipment. Snowworks (www.snowworks.co.uk) offer All Terrain Safari courses to competent skiers in Sainte Foy.

There's a free navette from Sainte Foy village up to the resort. The public buses that run from Bourg Saint Maurice to Tignes/Val d'Isere can drop you off there.

Follow Tori's blog at www.tignestori.com

Sainte Foy is the perfect resort for all the family. Small but with bundles of Alpine charm, don't be fooled by its size. It has a lot to offer with two nursery slopes, two green, seven blue, eleven red and four black runs. Plus the vast amount of adventurous off-piste; there really is something for everyone.

Ossie loves the fun terrain, jumps and forest runs – it's a completely different environment to the Espace Killy. For children who are competent skiers the whole resort is an adventure ski land!

Skiing powder all morning, stopping for lunch and then coming back out to ski more fresh tracks isn't something I'd had chance to do in the larger resorts, which get tracked out early in the day. It got me exploring more of Sainte Foy and before long I discovered all of its big off-piste routes. More than 98% of Sainte Foy is in the protected Vanoise National Park. Some of my favourite ski days have been long tours exploring hidden villages like the beautiful Monal and then skiing back with friends as the sun sets.

FOR CHILDREN AND BEGINNERS

The nursery slopes are right in the heart of the resort. Slow-moving magic carpets and wide gentle pistes make it a relaxed, fun and friendly atmosphere for little ones' first turns on skis. Once they can control their speed and turns it's easy to get kids up skiing in the mountains quickly. The chairlift is child-friendly - it has a bar that goes between their legs and locks securely – so they can safely go higher to ski their first gentle forest run that winds through the trees and leads back to the nursery slopes.