

Chalet Guide

Chalet Marvel.

Balcons De Verchaix.

La Pleigne.

Verchaix. Nr Samoens.

Haute Savoie.

France 74440

Tel: 00 33 45 08 94 27

Getting There

1. Fly to Geneva with Jet2, EasyJet and BA - You must have a car when you get there so I use National– you pick up the car at the 'National' desk on the Swiss side - make sure you specify that you want the car on the Swiss not the French side (Swiss motorways are fantastic and if you use a French car on Swiss motorways the Swiss will charge you one year's road tax on your way back to the airport!)
2. When you get in the car make sure you have your passports handy for customs and Euros for the tolls

Directions

1. When you leave the airport on the Swiss side then join the highway (there's only a one way road so you are going to go in the right direction!) but move out to the far left hand lane as soon as possible onto the long straight road to Geneva and 'France'.
2. Continue on this road for about half a mile until you reach a set of traffic lights with a large bridge in front of you. This is a very scary turn left that you can't really see from the junction that crosses the dual carriageway to your left and runs parallel to the far side of the bridge and is signposted 'France'. Take this turning and drive a few hundred yards to the traffic lights at the top of the hill.
3. At the lights turn sharp right and join the motorway 4. From here it is motorway all the way to within 10 miles of the chalet – follow the signs for France and 'Chamonix Mt Blanc' on the motorway A40 5. You will reach Swiss/French customs/border – continue following the signs for another 20 miles and look out for Junction 18 of the A40 which is signposted to 'Samoens'. Take this exit.
4. You immediately start to go through the large industrial town of Cluse and you follow the signs to Samoens
5. This will take you through Cluse to the mountain behind which you will climb to the top and down the other side
6. As you descend the mountain you will see a town down to your left (tanninges) and you will come to a sharp left hand turn about halfway down, this turn has a slip road to the right which is signposted 'Verchaix' – take this road
7. After a few miles you will enter the village of Morillion take the first turning left before you enter the main village
8. At the end of the road turn left at the T junction and you will reach the roundabout at the bottom of Verchaix
9. Go straight across the roundabout and up the mountain!
10. Go through the village of Verchaix and continue up the mountain road
11. Another mile up the mountain and you will reach the signposted hamlet of 'La Pleigne'
12. Look out on the left for a large youth hostel/hotel (Le Clos Savoyard)and just beyond the hotel you will see a small road to the left (look out for the gate post with a Gargoyle) – take this road (if you can call it that!!)
13. Take the next turning right to the 'Balcons de Verchaix'

14. Drive through the estate of chalets to the back row and as you turn the final bend to the right where the huge stone wall is – our chalet is the fifth from the right on the back row directly above the highest point of the wall
15. Park on the right in front of the large wall (there are about three car parking spaces there) and walk in front of the chalet to the right of ours to get to the front door
16. Use the silver key to unlock the outer shutter
17. The other key is for the outside patio doors on the ground level and the balcony level

When you arrive at the chalet

1. Open all the shutters from the inside manually except the shutter in the lounge near the TV which has an electronic switch to the right of the window (if when you switch it to open nothing happens just leave it a minute or two as sometimes it takes a time to work (it's a French thing..!) – make sure you secure all shutters using the bolts so that they can't blow about if windy. A lot of the windows have air vents on top of them – please do not block these up as they the chalet needs a constant circulation of fresh air.
2. There are three under floor heating switches (two on the lower ground floor) and one on the middle floor) – in normal circumstances/weather set all these to level three(or 20 degrees on middle floor). It takes at least 12 hours to fully kick in so any changes you make you will have to be patient! On leaving return the Level to 1 (this protects the chalet against frost)
3. Next to the patio doors in the ground floor entrance there is a cupboard with a fuse box – at the bottom right there is a tiny switch that has three settings (zero, auto and one). When you first arrive set the switch to '1' and then the following day, move it to Auto – this is the hot water switch. Setting '1' is the permanently on setting, Auto heats the tank over night on cheap electricity and O is off (return it to zero when you leave) – Auto gives sufficient hot water in the chalet.

When you leave the Chalet

1. Please return the keys to same place you picked them up from
2. In winter please return all the underfloor heating switches (there are three – one on middle floor and two on the ground floor) to number 2. In summer return them to number 1 (10-12 degrees on middle floor)
3. Return the hot water switch to 0
4. Put used towels in baths and used linen stripped from the beds and left on the beds
5. Shut all the shutters and lock the shutters to the front door
6. Please make sure you have left all your rubbish in the skip at the entrance to the road leading to the chalet

Inside the chalet

- **The TV** – Use the main (large) remote control to turn on TV and press and then press the Home button on the surround sound/dvd remote. From this menu you can watch sky or watch a DVD. Use the SKY remote to work SKY (some of the channels available are listed on the back of the SKY remote). The upstairs and downstairs bedrooms both have TV with DVD.
- **Fireplace** – when you arrive, unhook the chain on the inside of the fireplace to the right. This opens the air vent in the chimney. Close it again when you leave. To work the fire there is wood on the balcony and kindling wood by the fire and firelighters. When you start a fire there is a knob on the left hand side of the fireplace - pull this out fully (it opens the fresh air vent) and open some or all of the grill vents at the front of the fireplace (this pushes the fresh air into the fireplace) – once the fire is really going close up all the vents and push the knob back in. To the right of the fire we have also added an air vent which you need to keep open (or partially open) when operating the fire otherwise smoke can leak back into the room.
- **Kettle** – Filter needs replacing on kettle when it gets to zero and flashes. The filters are in a lower cupboard in the kitchen. When you have changed the filter you need to run through two full kettles of water before boiling and using for the first time
- **Bedding** – Bedding can be found in the cupboard in the upstairs bathroom.
- On the day you leave, please can strip beds that you have used and leave the linen on the beds.
- **Towels** – There are several sets of white guest towels in both bathrooms.
- Please put used towels in the baths before you leave.

- **Bins** – You can get rid of your rubbish at the bin store at entrance to the estate. Recycling units are in the Verchaix Village facing the school
- **Appliance Manuals** – are all in the draw above the cooker – many are in French. There is a summary of how to use the oven in English on the notice board. Normal setting for dishwasher is 'ICS' – dishwasher tablet goes on container in upper rack. Don't over fill as it can't handle it!! Keep stocked with Rinse aid.
- **Broadband** – the chalet has wireless broad band – instructions of how to connect are pinned on the notice board next to the kitchen – PLEASE replace the instructions back on the board when you have connected - The Live Box Pass key you need to enter into your laptop to access the Wireless Broadband is: 6C1245F2A1633EC5316C4115D5
- **TV** – Chalet now has SKY + with HD in the lounge. To operate just use TV remote to turn TV on and press 'TV Guide' on sky remote – please delete all programmes you record before you leave and cancel any 'series links'. If you want to use the cinema/dvd system in the lounge use the system remote to switch on – then press the 'Home' button and select 'TV HDD' to watch TV through the cinema system or 'HD DVD' to watch DVD. If you are watching television through cinema system please turn down the TV sound otherwise the sound will echo. The upstairs double bedroom and the downstairs double bedroom both have SKY Freeview channels.
- Cupboards marked with 'PRIVE' please do not use as they contain our own personal possessions. Also the wardrobe in the entrance way is locked with our possessions.
- Next to the hob to the right you will see an unmarked switch next to the plug – switch it on (lower part pressed in) when you arrive and switch off when you leave – this cleans the air in the chalet.

The Area

Shopping – the main shop is Carrefour where you can get just about everything including English beans etc. Carrefour is located on the main road between Verchaix and Samoens (go back to the roundabout at the bottom of Verchaix and turn left to Samoens, Carrefour is a mile on that road on the right hand side). Cluses is also a great shopping area and they have a huge Carrefour which is signposted when you get near the town.

Eating – there are three main areas locally – Samoens, Verchaix and Morillon. For all restaurants it is advisable to go down and book at least 48 hours in advance when the area is busy – when its not busy (May/June/Oct/Nov) then most of them will not even be open! Most restaurants open from 12-2pm and 7.0pm – 9.30pm.

Samoens

Only 2 miles from Chalet, this is the largest town in the valley and has lots of great eating places: Our favourites:

1. **La Tornalta** – on the edge of the market square in almost a cave – great typical French food – try the Tartiflette (a cheese onion and potato dish). Tel:0450349868 (their English is not good so call in if you can)
2. **FiFine** – this is a detached large modern chalet near the new (and only) ski lift in Samoens village – if you drive along the road in front of the lift away from the river you will see Fifine on the left – this place is fantastic inside, the best restaurant in the valley for atmosphere, setting, service and food. It is the only place in the valley that you can get dressed up to go out (but you don't have to they are very relaxed) – it's also the most expensive. It's an absolute must if you are staying in the valley. Try the steak (just ace!) or any meat or fish dish. Fiona (my other half) swears that they also do the best fondue. Take a French/English dictionary – there are no English menus. Tel: 0450341029 (their English is not good so call in if you can)
3. **Pizza La Louisianna** – this is at the back end of Samoens behind the market square. It is lively and fun and relatively inexpensive and they have just started opening early at 7.0pm. Best night to go is Saturday. Eat the pizza La Louisiana. Tel: 0450344283 (they speak good English – call to book at 5.30 ish)
4. **La Clarine** – is right on the main street in Samoens near the banks. It's a traditional place, the French eat their – the food is great and in good weather they have a nice terrace. They open virtually all year. Reasonably priced. You have to try the 'brasseraderie' for two if you

go there. Its basically a mini barbecue of chicken and beef and you cook your meat at the table and its fantastic – my favourite meal/dish in Samoens.

To drink – there are not that many drink only places but favourites:

1. **The Irish bar** – just in between FiFine and La Louisiana on the road back to Samoens is a tiny Irish bar which has Sky Sports and shows all the premiership and champions league games as long as a French team are not playing....definitely a good drinking hole...!
2. **La Lune** - on the road in to Samoens from Verchaix you pass the hotel on the right (the Neige et Roc) and 200 yards on the left hand side is this bar/restaurant with nice bar area and terrace where you can laugh at the French trying to play mini golf... Food there is only ok but is good for non-French things its mainly a U.S. style menu with a hint of French

Morillion

When you get to the roundabout in the valley at Verchaix go straight on and Morillion is the village you skirted round on the way in...

1. **Le Potet** – not quite in Morillion village, when you get to the roundabout in the valley in Verchaix from the chalet turn right as if you were going to Tanninges – about 400 yards on the right you will see Le Potet. This is our local restaurant and is Pizza and traditional French Savoyarde dishes. Food is great, the owners are lovely and it's good price. When you feel lazy, they have a take away Pizza menu. The Pizzas are FANTASTIC!! Probably the best we have ever had. They only serve Pizzas on Thursday night to Sunday night. Try the best pizza in the world which is the 'Pizza Montagne' but ask for 'avec ognion'.
2. **Le Caribou** – directly across the road from Le Potet is the weird Caribou, a better place to drink than eat (its very similar in menu to La Lune) – owned by the same Irish guys who own the Irish bar in Samoens (funnily enough!) they are great people and very friendly
3. **Le Tourne Pierre** – on your drive into Morillion you will pass this restaurant on your right hand side – a detached large chalet. Nice atmosphere, people are really great and the food excellent. Try the Raclette here, normally this is served as uncooked cheese that you melt at the table (which is great – all restaurants have this) but at this place it comes melted in a casserole of cheese and onion and potato and is just fantastic – however expect to put on half a stone by just looking at it...

To drink:

Bar by the lake – on you way into Morilion you will see a lake on your left hand side and a bar/hut by the lake – this is our favourite place to drink when the weather is good - you can sit outside and usually it's lively – unless you are starving don't eat there!

Verchaix

1. **La Mendigote** – in Verchaix village on the mountain side - run by a complete psychopath old French lady who is very scary! She shouts at you when you walk in and she berated our children for bad behaviour once! But the food is good and very handy from the chalet (you can walk)
2. **The Vue de Neige** – across the road from La Mendigote is a hotel/bar/restaurant which is run by a an English couple who are fellow Man City fans. They have the best terrace and view anywhere in the valley – it's a spectacular place to drink (but do so in eating hours as they close up in between) - the food is good and everyone speaks English!

Places to Visit

1. **Annecy** is about 50 mins from the chalet, go back to Cluse and take the A40 motorway that you came on back to the airport and Annecy is sign posted – this is an absolute must visit place. Annecy is more visited by the French than Paris and when you get there you will know why – its absolutely fantastic place. There are two main parts to Annecy, the Lake where you can walk and have lunch and dinner on a boat. And also the old part of Annecy (across the road from where the dinner cruises leave) which is just like Venice. It's great in this area, bars, restaurants, shops and really lively. For the best restaurant we have been to try the Brasserie opposite the 'hotel de Ville' (again just near where the cruises sale from) - the hotel de ville is the town hall – have anything from the menu its ace and the setting is just fabulous.
2. **Mont Blanc** – again around 50 mins from chalet, back to Cluses but take the A40 in the opposite direction from the airport and follow the signs to Chamonix. You can go on ski lifts up the mountain and a train ride. Chamonix is lovely and worth a visit.

Skiing

1. The chalet is 4 mins drive to the nearest ski lift at Morillion which will give you access to the largest Ski area in France. Check out www.grand-massif.com for details of the skiing. If you are going for the Skiing then make your way via the lifts to Les Carroz from Morillion where you will find fantastic blue and red runs in the sun....
2. Ski passes can be obtained at the ski lift at Morillion or Samoens and also at the Tourist office in Samoens.
3. Samones now has two new telecabines – one starting from the town and one taking you to the top.

Summertime

Unlike most Ski areas, the Grand Massif region is busier in the summer than winter with a large amount of outdoor activities available and particular well suited for families with children – during July and August there is a programme of events running every day in the valley range from concerts on the lake to pottery sessions. Our favorite summer activities are:

1. **Paragliding** (you can jump off the mountain directly across the valley from the chalet!) – in summer time the skies will be full of Para gliders
2. **White Water Rafting** – from anywhere in the valley there are loads of WW companies – kids love this

3. **Walking/hiking** – particularly spectacular at the resort of Sixt (about 10 minutes from the chalet) – but also loads of walks directly from the chalet to the mountains and lakes behind
4. **Indiana Park** – this is like an assault course through the trees for Adults and kids – there is a small one in Morillion and a large one by the lake in Samoens – kids will play on this for hours
5. **La Luge** – A cross between sledging and the Luge – suitable for kids and adults and great fun – located in Morzine (about 25 mins from Chalet)
6. **Mountain Biking** – there are trails all over the valley
7. **Samoens and Morillion lakes** – provide lots of activities including – Tennis, Horse riding, Fishing, Quad Bikes, Archery, Golf (driving range), Trampolines and outdoor swimming pool.

Contact Numbers

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