

Les Bouquetins B, Champéry

Chalet Guide



Les Bouquetins B, Champéry

Welcome to our apartment

We are apartment no 1 on the upper ground floor and our name is marked on various doors and entrances.

Keys: the concierge has the keys to the apartment, unless we have given them to you in advance or arranged a secret drop for them. She is Nelly Marclay and her number is 024 479 18 85. Please ring her with an ETA either from Geneva airport, or if you are driving, when you hit Lausanne, so she can arrange to meet you there. Alternatively you can let me know what time you hope to be there (before you go – helps her with the cleaning schedule!) and I can let her know; then if it will be markedly different you can call her to let her know.

Inside the apartment we have a key rack, and there is another front door key, plus a key to the ski and boot locker and two post box keys. The front door key opens the doors to the block, the door to the apartment and the door to the ski room. The ski locker key only serves the ski locker and the locker in the boot room. The outside doors should be locked when you leave the apartment at all times (and obviously the door to the apartment itself). Locking it is a bit tricky – you have to lift the door handle **up** at which point you will feel the mechanism engaging. Then return the handle to its normal position and you can lock the door. Please also lock yourselves in at night. And please don't lose the keys!! Unless otherwise instructed, on departure leave the keys where you found them.

Directions to Champéry

NB unless you are going late in the season it is a good idea to take chains or snow tyres as the last 4 kms to Champéry can be treacherous in bad weather

Driving from London It is about 9 hours from Calais and very well signposted and good roads, motorway all the way apart from Langres to Lausanne via the D road (compensates by being really beautiful). We go Reims, Troyes, Besancon (via the D67) Pontarlier, joining the motorway after the Swiss border to Lausanne. When you reach Lausanne follow signs for Grand St Bernard when the motorways split and this takes you on towards Montreux along the lake. If the weather is bad you can take the motorway all the way which is longer but avoids the road over the Jura. At the end of the lake, after Aigle, look for sign to St Triphon, Portes de Soleil, take this into Monthey and follow signs for Champéry (about 20 mins from the turnoff). Don't miss the left turn to Champéry after leaving Monthey otherwise you will end up in Morgins. In Champéry as you hit the village you will see a right turn up into the centre of the village. Take this and immediately on the right you will see two almost identical apartment chalet buildings. Bouquetins B is the first on the right and our car parking spaces are the first two on the right.

Driving from Geneva A very easy route is to pick up a car at Geneva airport (Swiss side) and jump onto the motorway which is right there and follow signs to Lausanne, and then follow directions as above.

By Train from Geneva If you don't want to hire a car, you can get a train to Aigle from the airport. They run every half hour or so and take about 1.15-1.30. At Aigle you can either get a cab (25 mins but quite expensive) or hop on the AOMC train/tram that goes all the way to Champéry. In fact it stops just below the apartment (Champéry Village) – don't take it all the way to the cable car, get off at the first stop in Champéry. The train takes about an hour, although it is a pretty ride.

Arriving - Making yourself at home

View of Dents du Midi from the apartment



As we are only renting to friends and not to strangers, we have furnished the apartment as a second home and have chosen everything with love and care! Just to make it easier I have outlined a few hints as some of the equipment is too state of the art for me...

Kitchen There are English language directions for all the Miele appliances (except for the Hob) in the drawer by the hob. The hob – ceramic so be careful of scratches – takes a little getting used to. Essentially you have to touch it on, and then touch the burner you want to use (it flashes) then touch the plus or minus until you reach the temperature. The kettle works v quickly on bottom left at 9! Don't leave anything touching the surface of the hob (unless you are cooking it) as a safety feature will cut out the power.

I have left various things in the fridge freezer and store cupboards in case you are caught short – please replace anything you use, and let me know if you break anything. (Nothing is expensive, mostly Habitat but I would need to replace from here)

The dishwasher, oven and microwave are fairly obvious.

There is a fondue set in the top cupboard above the stove, plus a recipe book. We also have a fondue burner which takes a Le Creuset casserole – better for cheese.

Stove You can get more wood from Denner supermarket just down the road and store it under the stove or on the balcony. The apartment is so warm you won't need it; it is more for the effect! Use firelighters to start it rather than paper. You need to leave the door slightly ajar while it heats up then use the vents. Takes a bit of trial and error but works well.

Heating cannot be adjusted at present as the building is being conditioned.

Windows and doors If you are too hot you can part open the windows and doors by lifting the handles upwards and the doors/windows open from the top, at an angle. Turn the handle to 90 degrees and the doors open; down is locked. Be careful to ensure that the door is fully shut at the top before opening it the other way as they have been known to jam!

Shutters Most of the doors and windows have shutters. These may be open when you arrive, but please close them when you leave.

TV/stereo Both TVs are DVD players – integrate as they say – and is in English language. We also have the basic Teledis cable service with channels in French, German and English. BBC World, CNN etc so that you can keep up with the news.

The stereo is a radio/CD player and there is also an IPOD dock (tape function on the stereo). If your IPOD does not fit there are some alternate cradle inserts or you can just plug the stereo jack into the top of your player.

Electricity Switzerland has strange 3 pin plugs which do take European round pin adapters (although not the fatter French plugs). There are one or two UK adapters in the cupboard opposite the front door. The voltage is the same as the UK.

Dining table Our v expensive dining table can be extended by a natty mechanism. Please use mats on it at all times. There is a lazy Susan thing which might be quite useful too.

Bedrooms/linen The linen for each bed is clearly marked by type in the linen cupboard. All linen will be clean when you arrive and beds made up. If you need to change the sheets for any reason, you will need to wash the ones you are taking off as we only have two sets of everything (see laundry below). At the end of your stay can you take all dishcloths, sheets, towels and bathmats and put them in a big pile by the door as the cleaner will take them away for washing. Blue towels in bathroom, orange in shower room (as you will see!)

Shoes Please take off shoes when you come in and leave on shoe rack. Ski boots NOT allowed anywhere apart from on journey from front door to boot room!!

Smoking Please don't smoke in the apartment; use the balcony.

Ski and boot room/Ski locker

The ski locker is on the basement level. Ours is the first one and has a special key (on the key rack in the apartment). The boot room is on the lower ground floor – i.e. between us and the basement and can be opened by the front door key.

Hanging space

Hang ski jackets and coats in the hall; the bottom half of the linen cupboard is for our ski stuff and other hanging items, so please use the hooks in the bedrooms and the ample cupboard space for your things.

Sauna

There is/will be a sauna at some stage, not sure when. Opposite the boot room! Not sure which of the keys works – one of them will!!

Laundry

Through the ski boot room there is a big washing machine and dryer – with French instructions. Bonne chance!! There is also a card on the key rack which charges the electricity to our apartment. There is some hand wash in the bathroom cabinet if you need to rinse anything out. Use the towel rails for drying, but keep the floor mopped if the things are v wet.

Cleaning material/ironing board etc

The cupboard facing you as you come in has mops, brushes, ironing boards etc. There are cleaning materials in one of the kitchen cupboards too.

Parking

Parking in Champéry is at a premium and is not free so be careful. Our two parking spaces are a valuable commodity; please make sure you use only the first two on the right. You can drive to the cable car car park (paying) and to Grand Paradis car park (free).

Problems!

Please ring either me or Nelly Marclay (conciierge as above) esp. if it's to do with heating, water and building problems as she can get in touch with the building management.

When you leave

Cleaning is difficult to arrange in a small village and the only slot I can get is between 3-4pm on the Saturday. For leavers I guess this is not such a problem, but I would request that you leave no later than 12pm so as not to clash with new arrivals. For arrivals, as the apartment will not be clean until 5-ish, I suggest you leave your luggage in the car, boot room or hall outside, and go and hire skis and equipment, have a shop, a meal, a drink, look around and come back at about 5pm when the apartment should be clean. If you arrive really early you could get a half days skiing in! Half day passes from 12pm.

Skiing

Ski hire We use the Borgeat shop by the cable car station. This has the advantage that you can leave skis there overnight if you are v lazy! There is an Intersport on the high street which has a different selection. Prices are about the same.

Getting to lifts The ski bus stops outside our door and will take you to the cable car. A second bus runs between the cable car and the Grand Paradis

Chair lift, which is a fast chair lift taking you to the same place, but in two stages. Not worth it unless you drive there. When the conditions are good this is a great ski down the mountain. When conditions are not so good it is best to come down in the cable car. There are a couple of ski maps in the apartment.

Ski area The Portes du Soleil area is huge – 14 resorts and 209 lifts. From the top of the Champéry cable car or the Grand Paradis chair you are one run from Le Croset and the Super Mosette chair which takes you to Avoriaz, the heart of the area which has huge amounts of skiing. There are lots of blue and red ‘cruising runs’, tough mogul fields, including the extreme Chavanettes, or Swiss Wall, and lots of off piste. Make sure that if you head for one of the further resorts you can make it back in time (suggest start returning no later than 3pm as it always takes at least an hour to make the connecting lifts over) – or take your toothbrush. Most of the lifts are fast chairs although you will find the odd T-bar and button lift. Some runs can get pretty busy although areas like the Linga, between Avoriaz and Chatel always seem to have great snow and fewer crowds. Some of the best hard runs are in the black ski run area to the right of Avoriaz village on the map – the Coupe du Monde, Combe and Arête runs.

Abonnement These take the form of high tech cards which they programme electronically. You can buy them at either the cable car or the Gd Paradis chair lift. You can buy Suisse or Portes du Soleil – the latter giving you access to the whole huge area, 600kms of piste, mainly in France and including most of the best lunch spots. But if you are a beginner, not worth it.

Ski School There is an ESS in the High Street, quite far down...I haven't used it, but I am sure its fine. They do lessons mostly at Les Crosets, at the top of the cable car.

Restaurants There are some lovely restaurants. On the Champéry side the nicest is Les Marmottes which is a wooden hut by the side of La Rippaille ski lift – a T bar and a button next to each other so easy to spot (just below the Swiss Wall!!). Otherwise there are two good areas in France – Les Lindarets, or rather La Chevre, which is a bit further down the Ardent run where we like La Chaudronne and La Terrasse (the latter owned by a Corsican). Pizzas in the former and great salads in both. Plat du jour and local wine are always good. Further over towards La Linga, try La Pierre au Loup in the Plein Dranse – but there are several restaurants there and they specialise in tartiflette and other fondue/cheesy/potatoey things. On the way down the Gd Paradis run to the village, the second restaurant is good for a gluhwein, or even for lunch if you want to come down the mountain. The restaurants in Avoriaz tend to be self service...but at the bottom of the Coup du Monde run on the way down to Morzine there is a sweet little place which does soup and salad. At the very bottom there is a good hotel, by the cable car back up to Avoriaz. This does more substantial food and is worth knowing about when crowded.

Shopping

Supermarkets Three in Champéry – Denner – just down the road; Coop – further up the main street, and one by the cable car. The best supermarkets are in Monthey and if you are there for a week and want to do a lot of cooking, gourmet eating I recommend Manor (fabulous deli and bread counter) or the Coop which you see as you enter the Monthey tunnel. To get to Manor go past the Coop and follow the signs to Centre Ville and then you take a right after the Jumbo centre and you will find it, it is a big complex, and has a good general department store attached. There is also, respectively, a boulangerie, a boucherie and a fromagerie in the village if you don't mind paying a little more. All good. The best meat (per the locals) is from the meat counter in the supermarket by the cable car.

Gear Borgeat in the high street has nice fashion as well as ski stuff. Otherwise a better selection in Manor at Monthey.

Cash

Most mountain restaurants take Euros and Swiss Francs but in France they rip you off on the exchange so worth having both currencies. Also abonnement and meals can be paid by credit card. There are several cash machines in the village – you can get cash on visa and maestro.

Restaurants and bars (very important!)

Centre: in the main street, does good grub (ladies night half price Thursdays!) and has a Thai/pacific rim section as well. Good for gluhwein and hot chocolates after skiing.

Le Nord does a good fondue and local specialities such as Raclette. Further up the main street. Popular with the locals.

Mitchell's: a flash modern place going from the main street to the cable car. We haven't been but Christine, my cousin, says it is very good.

The Bar des Guides is v authentic and atmospheric.

The Crevasse disco seems to be popular with the young!!!

Enjoy your stay! We will be jealous...



View up the main street in summer

Contact Numbers

Vicky Mobile +44 (0)7788 452333
Ross Mobile +44 (0)7831 361190

Concierge:

Nelly Marclay +41 (0)24 479 18 85

Doctor Fellay 024 4791516

Also if you need any more local support my cousin Christine has volunteered to support. She lives in Geneva and has a chalet in the village. Her mobile number is

+41 792 499513