

IN THE EYES OF AN EXPAT

TRANSPLANT
Michael Silitch

JOB
Owner of Michael Silitch Mountain Guides

TIME DONE
5 years

HOME HILL
Waterville Valley, New Hampshire

WHY CHAMONIX?

Skiing here is huge and wild. There are trees, steeps, cliffs, glaciers—you have the freedom to ski wherever you want, and the amount of vertical is incredible. You can start at the top of a run in the freezing cold on wind-blown, then hit a thousand vert of perfect powder, then ski on spring corn and slush, and finish six hours later—all with only one lift ride.

WHAT'S THE PERFECT DAY?

Ski the Vallée Blanche. You ride a cable car from about 3,000 to 12,000 feet, then ski off the back side of Mont Blanc. The run is 12 miles long on a glacier, and you can stop in the middle at a *refugio* for fondue. A single run takes all day, and you don't even have to take your skis off. For something shorter and steeper, hit Pas de Chevre, "the goat's path," on Les Grands Montets—it's 5,000 feet of gullies and couloirs.

YOUR FAVORITE SPOTS FOR FOOD AND GROG?

Le Monchu (a.k.a. Munchies) is a rustic place with local food. It's great for everything from steak to Thai chicken—those Swedish cooks are the best. It's also got a well-stocked bar. If you're looking for an après-ski beer and live music spot, go to Chambre Neuf.

WHAT'S THE BEST TIME TO GO?

Mid February to mid March; the snow can be thin in December.

GOT ANY ADVICE FOR AMERICANS?

Bring your AT skis and avy gear. Most locals carry their

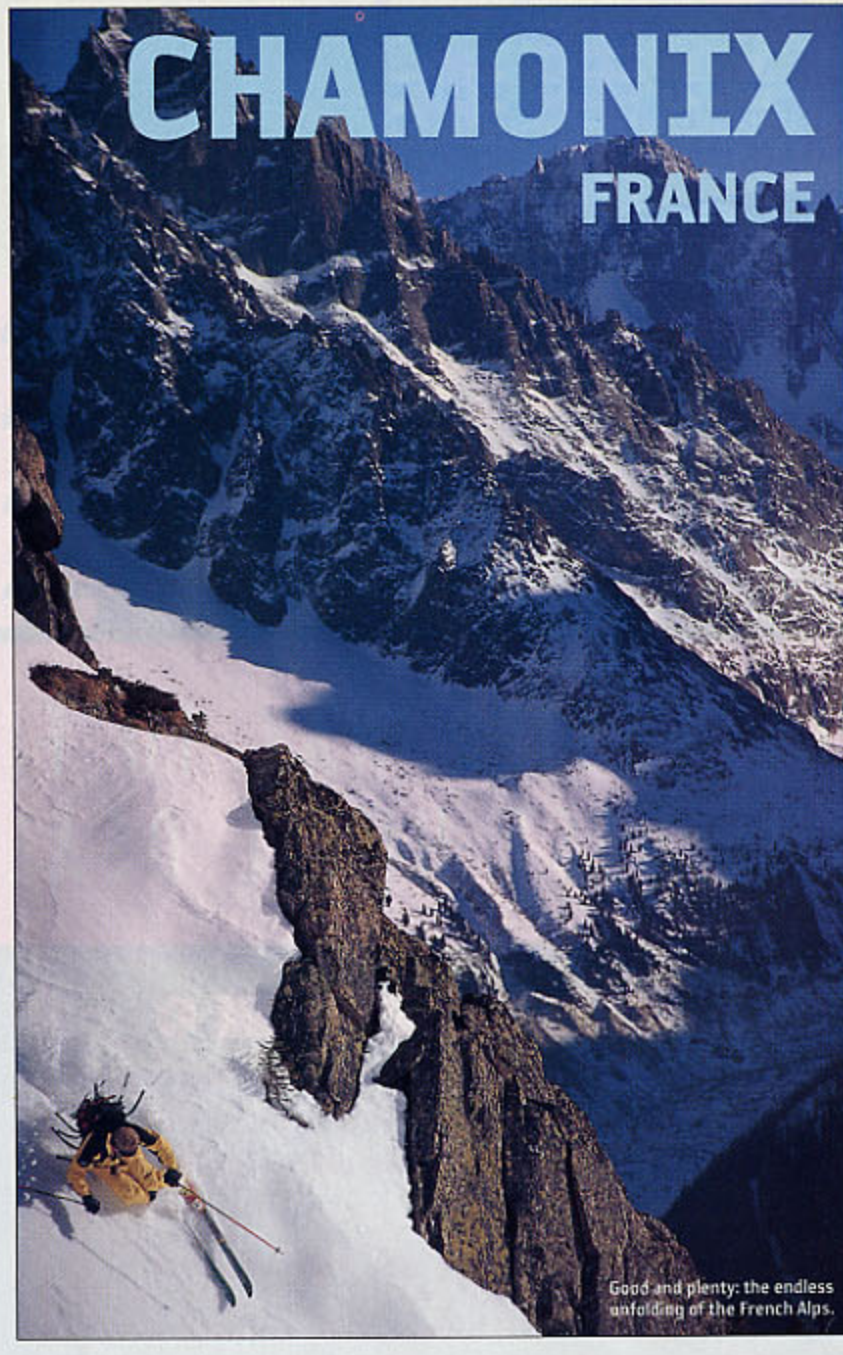
beacons, shovels, and skins whenever they go because you can't tell what's inbound and what's OB.

WHAT'S CHAMONIX'S CLAIM TO FAME?

I hate to use the word "extreme," but Chamonix is where it all began. Maybe it was the French mentality, with people like Jean-Marc Boivin (the first to ski the east side of the Matterhorn) who made it happen. Here you get the big mountain experience; it gives you a whole new way to look at skiing.

THE VITALS

TOP ELEVATION: 12,602 feet (Aiguille du Midi)
VERTICAL DROP: 9,209 feet
NUMBER OF LIFTS: 49
NUMBER OF PISTES: 145
PHONE: 33 (0) 4 50 53 00 24
WEB: chamonix.net
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Good and plenty: the endless unfolding of the French Alps.

STEVE BRUNSO

IN THE EYES OF AN EXPAT

TRANSPLANT
Mark Shapiro

JOB
Photographer

TIME DONE
31 years

HOME HILL
Collingwood, near Toronto, Ontario

WHY VERBIER?

I worked with a Swiss guy in the States, and he told me to come over. He was my catalyst for Europe. It became a walkabout, an adventure. I ended up renting a chalet in Verbier and met tons of people. And the skiing is 10-star.

WHAT'S THE PERFECT DAY?

Get up first thing. Ski Creblet, a slot on the front of the mountain above Lac des



Fat boards, phat terrain: Preparing to ski down to the clouds.

VERBIER SWITZERLAND

like the Pub Mont Fort for beers; it's where nightlife starts, there's no techno, and the walls are covered with black-and-white pictures. People usually head to the Farm Club (where the Royals go) and Taratata (for the younger crowd and the boarders).

WHAT'S THE BEST TIME TO GO?

The week or two after New Year's. It's much less crowded, and snow is usually solid by then. February has all the school holidays, and March has Easter break.

GOT ANY ADVICE FOR AMERICANS?

Try to come for the Verbier Extremes at the end of March. Snowboarders hike up the Bec de Bosses and choose 45- to 55-degree lines through couloirs and cliffs. People hang out at Gentienes all day in the sun and watch them come down.

WHAT'S VERBIER'S CLAIM TO FAME?

It's a party town like Aspen, but it's really international. The common language is English even though the local language is French—you can buy *USA Today*. Oh, and it's very posh—and getting more so.

THE VITALS

TOP ELEVATION: 10,930 feet
VERTICAL DROP: 6,010 feet
NUMBER OF LIFTS: 100
NUMBER OF PISTES: 91
PHONE: 41 (0)27 775 3888
WEB: verbier.ch

ADAM CLARK

IN THE EYES OF AN EXPAT

TRANSPLANT
Jeff Swanson

JOB
Owner of Sport Jennewein, a ski shop

TIME DONE
20 years

HOME HILL
Kissing Bridge, New York

WHY ST. ANTON?

It was a low snow year, and there was a four-foot dump in the Alps. The trains were down, everything. I'd heard that St. Anton attracted people from all over, so I decided to come for the winter. I've been here ever since.

WHAT'S THE PERFECT DAY?

A lot of people go straight to the Valluga, the famous peak, but I'd go on Riffel 1 or Riffel 2 chairs to Rendl, another mountain on the other side of town. It's where the locals go for powder. It's only about 10 percent beginner piste, and it's wide-open above tree line. There are steeps on the front and a five-mile-long bowl on the other side that puts you right back in the center of town.

YOUR FAVORITE SPOTS FOR FOOD AND GROG?

Everyone goes to the Postkeller; it's high energy with a dance floor. I really love the Platz! Après, a small place with lots of local bums. Every time I go there, I see five people I know. It's right next to the Funky Chicken, which always pumps out the house music for the Swedes and the snowboarders.

WHAT'S THE BEST TIME TO GO?

Definitely early March. It's usually sunny and a bit warmer, so you can get powder skiing and spring skiing in the same trip.

GOT ANY ADVICE FOR AMERICANS?

You'll meet people from all over the world—Australia, Holland, Canada, New Zealand. I call it the Manhattan of the Alps, since

ST. ANTON AUSTRIA



European vacation: Powder en route to the Postkeller.

everyone here seems to be young, single, and urban. It's not a good place for the 50-and-over Deer Valley crowd.

WHAT'S ST. ANTON'S CLAIM TO FAME?

There's nothing like the expanses in the Arlberg. I've been here for two decades, and I never run out of new lines to take. There are just no limits.

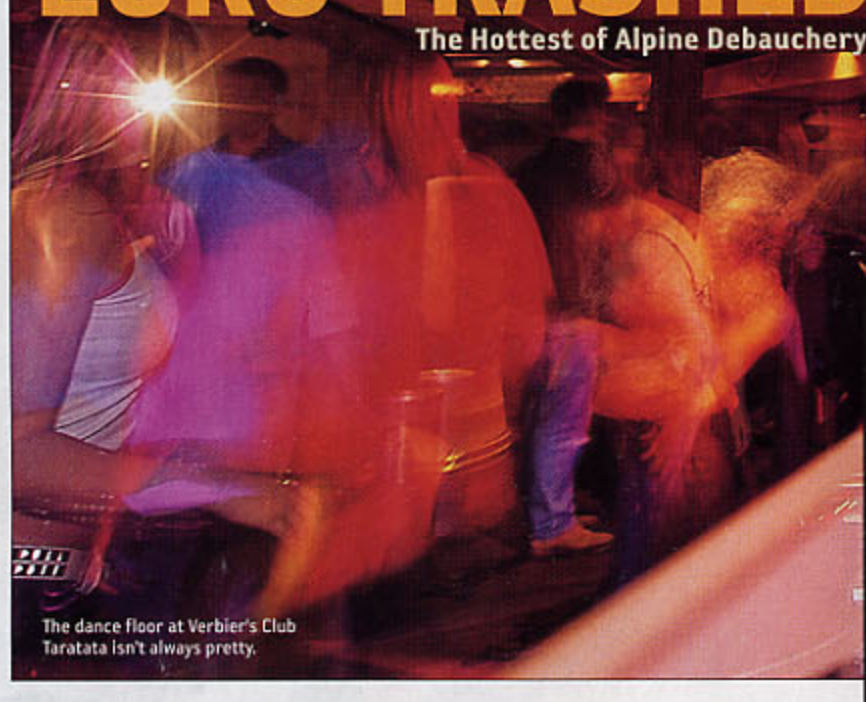
THE VITALS

TOP ELEVATION: 9,226 feet
VERTICAL DROP: 4,920 feet
NUMBER OF LIFTS: 46
NUMBER OF PISTES: 71
PHONE: 43 5583 28240
WEB: stantonamarlberg.com

HANK DE VEE

BY ROB REED

EURO TRASHED
The Hottest of Alpine Debauchery



The dance floor at Verbier's Club Taratata isn't always pretty.

ST. ANTON, AUSTRIA
Krazy Kanguruh

Quite possibly the world's best après spot. Housed in a chalet 300 yards up from the base, the Kanguruh's cheesy '80s anthems to "Crying at the Discotheque." But they seem to inspire everyday women to dance on the tables topless, while wearing ski boots. **Drinks:** Trays of tequila, pints, and B-52 shots. **Vibe:** A Brit-German fusion of bad music, party-girls, and white men who can't dance—all fresh off the slopes and fueled by oodles of booze. **What you need to know:** Photos of the party are available immediately—and indefinitely—at krazykanguruh.com.

Kandahar Club

Through a single door, you pass from St. Anton's pedestrian zone to a restaurant and club straight out of Marrakech. Featuring a Thai-Indian menu, Kandahar turns into a disco with DJ come 11 P.M. and then goes strong until 6 A.M. **Drinks:** Start with a bottle of red and perhaps a curry. **Vibe:** Expect even more raucous

late nights—with some of London's top DJs—since Kandahar's edgy sister club, Kartouch, closed this past summer. **What you need to know:** The owner's e-mail address, which is jonathanverney@compuserve.com. He can get you a table, get you a crash pad (he owns chalets in town), and he's the de facto mayor.

VERBIER, SWITZERLAND
Club Taratata

A basement nightclub with wooden beams, orange furniture worthy of *Charlie's Angels* (the TV show), and a dance floor crammed between the bar and DJ booth. Watch out for English men struggling against every grain of their lineage to find rhythm. **Drinks:** A bottle of Absolut, a bucket of ice, and a six-pack of Red Bull. **Vibe:** This miniature version of a full-scale Euro club really goes off at 2 A.M., when the other bars and pubs in town close. The Belgian DJ turns up the house music, and the 20-something crowd gets

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NORTH AMERICA

- Aspen, CO:** Aspen has it all. There's Eric's Bar, a candlelit lounge, which is next to the pool hall, which is next to the Cigar Bar, which has leather couches and martinis. Sip cosmos at Elevation, then go disco at Shooter's, take in live music at Double Diamond, endure a rave at Club Chelsea, and eat peanuts at Little Annie's.
- Whistler Blackcomb, B.C.:** Après starts early at Merlin's and Garibaldi Lift Co, then moves to go-go girls at Tommy Africa's or ogling at the split-level Savage Beagle.
- Killington, VT:** The East's biggest mountain parties are a two-step at Casey's Caboose and the Wobbly Barn.
- Heavenly, CO:** Watch cage dancing at Caesar's or crooners at Harrah's in South Lake Tahoe. Take a break at McP's pub.
- Park City, UT:** Crush nuts at O'Shucks, then go clubbing at Harry O's or listen to live music at Mother Urban's or Cisero's.
- Breckenridge, CO:** The Breckenridge Brewery and Cecelia's lead the low-down; The Underworld has you dancing.
- Jackson, WY:** Skip the cheesy cowboy bars and patronize real saloons: the Log Cabin and the Stagecoach (in Wilson).
- Vail, CO:** Drink beer out of a fish bowl on Fridays at Garfinkles or go techno at Club Sanctuary.
- Telluride, CO:** Check out bluegrass at Fly Me to the Moon Saloon, margaritas at Swede Finn, and martinis at the Noir Bar.
- Sun Valley, ID:** The gig's in Ketchum, where you'll be at Grumpy's for beers and Whiskey Jacques for psychedelic swing. —Evelyn Spence

ROB REED