

askjo YOUR AGONY AUNT FOR THE ALPS



Q I'm interested in working a ski season, how do I get a job?

A The main recruitment time is July-October. During this time all the companies will be busy reviewing CV's and interviewing. However, some companies' recruit through Natives all year round and by May there are usually several companies seeking staff.

You shouldn't panic however if you haven't got a job by November. Companies often come to us looking for staff up to the start of the season because of last minute dropouts. Although most of these jobs are for qualified and experienced cooks there are often general jobs available too.

Make sure that you've got a decent CV. Keep to 2 pages and keep the layout simple. The most important information should be on the first page. Put your most recent jobs first, and draw out your relevant responsibilities. Don't mention why you left the jobs. Get a friend to have a look through for typos. Most of all be honest!

To apply for jobs visit www.natives.co.uk

Q Is it a problem if I only want to work in Meribel?

A If you really do want to insist on one particular resort, that of course is up to you. However, it will reduce your chances of getting a job and we don't recommend it. You may have friends there, but you will make great friends wherever you work.

Q Look, promise I'm not a geek, and I do have my own friends, but I'd love to meet other people doing a season. How?

A Natives runs a party during the ski show – this is a great place to meet up with lots of people who have done or who will be doing a ski season.

It is also worth checking out the Natives Chat Room; there are always guys on there who are out in resort or looking to head out.

Q I've managed to get a job for the ski season, but I'm only allowed to take one bag with me. I'm a high maintenance kind of girl and can't cope without my hair straighteners – what can I leave out?

A Minimise your clothes – you'll be amazed at how few you need. If you're provided with uniform, besides your ski gear, you'll only really need a couple of pairs of trousers and some tops for going out in the evening. The key to keeping warm in ski resorts is layering – i.e. a couple of thin tops will have more effect than 1 big top. So leave those huge jumpers at home!

Other useful things to bring with you include a copy of your contract, music, DVDs, any medicine that you are prescribed, a camera, phone and charger, and a cash card so you can get your hands on your wages! (Check what your bank charges are for withdrawals made abroad)

Q How do I make a cake rise in the mountains?

A Altitude does funny things. Your Mum's ancient family cake recipe that has never before failed might end up flat as pancake. The key is yoghurt – just half a pot of yoghurt in your cake will make it as fluffy as a cloud! You

MISSING PERSONS

Help - I'm a red blooded male and there are no girls in my resort! What's all that about?

So you're in St. Anton or, perhaps, Chamonix then. My only suggestions would be to change resort, or change orientation! With ratios of 7:1 it's likely to be seriously competitive out there. Items that help are – pro-rider contract, High-Mountain Guide qualification, après-ski band membership, or enormous wallet (to a certain type of girl). Don't expect a ski instructor qualification to impress anybody except for beginners on holiday these days – instructors are ten-a-penny in resorts. Basically, you're going to have to work hard on your chat and your riding to pull.

GIRLS: you have all the pulling power. Basically, I'd advise a Woolworths strategy – Pick 'n Mix. Enjoy!

should also remember that water boils at a lower temperature in the mountains, and therefore food will take longer to cook if you are boiling it.

Q Guests are driving me crazy each week asking the same questions – especially "what do you do in the summer?" What can I tell them?

A If you really do get fed up with answering this question, then for a bit of fun, you could go for the most extravagant story possible. "I race elephants... in India", "I'm a trapeze artist", "I'm George Clooney's personal masseuse" (or is that just my idea of heaven). It's just a bit of fun and most of your guests will cotton on.

If you really are stuck for something for the summer remember you can find summer jobs at natives.co.uk

Q I've previously done a couple of seasons, and I'm now making my millions in the city. When I go on holiday how do I avoid looking like a punter?

A The key to this is preparation. Two weeks before you are due to go on holiday start applying fake tan to the bottom half of your face – wear your goggles as you do this as a guide. Make sure your trousers for wearing in resort are at least two sizes too big for you and can be worn half way down your bum. They should be at the point so that when you bend down it appears that it will be impossible for them to stay up. If possible immerse your hands alternately in hot and cold soapy water so they become red and chapped. Girls could also apply padding around their bottom area.

Help me I'm still confused!

If you find that you still don't know what to do, or if you have any questions about working a ski season please email jo@natives.co.uk

Q My friends have been offered different resorts to work in. What if I will never make any friends?

A Do not panic. Think of it as your first day at school (just without your Mum crying at the gates). You made friends there, you'll make them in resort. Lots of people arrive in resort not knowing anyone. This won't last long. When you're working, eating, and sleeping (ahem) with people 24 hours a day, you can't help but make friends. One tip – arrange to go skiing or boarding with people, it is much better to bond on the slopes than in the bars as you are more likely to remember who they are and what they told you next day!

Interviews in London, Manchester, Birmingham, Bristol, Edinburgh, Plymouth

Snow Business

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