

“WORKING A SEASON CAN TURN SOCIAL SMOKERS INTO ADDICTS”

Tobacco was introduced to Europe at the end of the fifteenth century, but it was not until the 1950's that the dangers of smoking were firmly established. Fifty years later, since 01 July 2007 England and Wales at last introduced a ban on smoking in public places.

Around 114,000 smokers die in the UK every year as a result of their habit. So, if the ban does result in fewer people smoking (currently 24% of adults), it will certainly be worth it. Ironically, the principal negative of the new ban is the potential carbon cost from the increased number of patio heaters used to keep outdoor puffers warm.

But what's the relevance to snowsports? Well, quite simply that the paradigm has shifted. For so many years now, an Alpine bar has been the ultimate smoky environment – smoke fumes kept locked indoors from the sub-zero temperatures outside. But it's not just the UK which is changing...

Italy banned smoking in all public indoor spaces back in 2005, as did Norway. Germany and Austria are currently debating legislation banning smoking in indoor public spaces.

And most significantly, a smoking ban in cafes, nightclubs and restaurants will be applied in France from 01 January 2008. This start date has left some bars undecided as to whether they will apply the ban from

the beginning of the season or change at New Year.

Tim Wall, owner of popular bar, the Ski Lodge in La Tania, has not decided on when to start the ban. However

he has already invested in huge parasol heaters for his terrace, in anticipation of the change. “These really are state of the art, Swiss-made and measure 7m by 7m each, so cover a huge area,” Wall told Tribe.

Richard Lett, owner of the Evolution Group, which includes Dicks Tea Bar in

Val d'Isere and Meribel, confirmed that all their bars will be applying the smoking ban from the start of the season.

“There's always been a strange dichotomy between such a healthy outdoors sport and the attachment to smoking by season workers,” Lett told us. “Working a season can convert ‘social smokers’ to addicts, so the new law should help reduce the numbers of workers who smoke.”

Bars will have the option to create a fumeur – a dedicated smoking area similar to those found in airports. “We have been encouraged to create these areas,” said Lett.

In the Lavachet Lounge in Tignes, owner TC already operates a non-smoking policy. “The bar still attracts smokers as well as non-smokers,” TC told us, “Even they get fed up of being in bars full of smoke. When they do need a puff all they do is go outside; simple.”

Those found in breach of the ban will be fined - EUR75 for individuals and EUR150 for the premises where the offence occurred. As unlikely as it may sound from the country of Gauloises and Gitanes, smoking may no longer be cool in France.

BUTT OUT

If you do smoke this winter, dispose of your cigarettes responsibly.



- * Cigarette butts can take 12 years to biodegrade
- * Cigarette butts leak toxins that contaminate the environment.
- * Chemicals can leach from cigarette butts within one hour of contact with snow
- * 'Tribe' recommends the Boodi portable ashtray for getting rid of your butts safely this winter. Made ethically in Yorkshire, this pocket-size portable ashtray is made from recycled, recyclable and biodegradable materials. Buy them online now, or win them at this winter's Show Love Tour (www.showlove.co.uk)



Shake your Boodi: their portable ashtrays are the best way to keep the piste butt-free