

# askjo YOUR AGONY AUNT FOR THE ALPS



**Q Dear Jo,**  
Since making friends with you on Facebook I'd like to get to know you better but you've got so many friends and seem so popular will you be interested?

**A** Well, I'm flattered you want to get to know me – why don't you send me a message and we'll see, I try to reply to everyone, honest! Visit my profile:

<http://tiny.cc/WM5c0>

**Q Dear Jo,**  
My Dad had a look at my winter season contract and basically, thinks I'm an idiot because the money is so crap, plus I have to pay £100 deposit before going. I don't know how to reply, as when he puts it like that, it doesn't look good. Am I an stupid signing my life away for such a pittance?

**A** This is a quandary that leaves a bitter taste in the mouth of many a caring parent – my doting Daddy, even after my fourth season, couldn't get his head round it. There are two issues here. The first is that the season worker has to accept that yes, while the pay for a season is minimal, depending on the job you're doing, it can be borderline insulting! But, take on more responsibility and you'll get paid (a bit) more. However, all your food, accommodation and bills are covered for the season, plus most companies include your equipment hire and lift pass too. So the wage, small as it may be, is essentially beer money (or wine, vodka, Jaeger Bomb money). Plus, don't forget the cracking tips that can be had if you work hard and impress your guests. Prudent season workers have been known to actually make money on a season, but I'm not really in a position to help you with that.

The second issue is the deposit. This started a long time ago when lots of naughty season workers ruined it for the rest of us. They accepted jobs, took the free travel to resort then disappeared with their season lift pass, never to be seen again. So to protect themselves companies ask for a deposit to ensure you turn up in resort to actually do your job. You'll get it back at the completion of a successful season, so although it's an extra expense now, just think how grateful you'll be of that extra cash at the end of the season. If that's not enough to satisfy your worried rentals then

## MOST FREQUENTLY ASKED Q...

**Dear Jo,**  
I've landed my dream job in St Anton as a chalet host but I'm worried I'll miss out on Christmas in the UK. Is it possible to come home for a week so I can see my friends and family?

We get asked this question a lot here at Natives Towers and to be totally honest (as you'd expect from me), holidays, weddings, 60th birthdays, 21sts, christenings and anniversaries – we've heard them all – and it's a big NO! Hate to break it to you but if you want to do a season, you need to be free for the whole five months. Other than extreme circumstances, tour ops and chalet companies don't really appreciate their staff b\*ggering off on mini-breaks while the rest of the staff are left behind to cope with double the workload. If you can't live without a Christmas at home then seriously consider whether you should be doing a season, because let's face it, you're going to be having far too much fun to care about another family Christmas in the UK. Ask yourself this – would you rather be sitting around with your super-annoying relatives watching the millionth re-run of the *Only Fools and Horses* Christmas special, or hitting the hill in fancy dress and dancing the night away with your new found resort friends? Plus, Santa will find you in the Alps, just make sure you leave your forwarding address.

remind them that you won't be living under their roof for five months, then ask for a lift to the airport.

**Q Dear Jo,**  
Will my tour op cover me for insurance for the season?

**A** Good question – dull, but important! Check with your employer what you're covered for, as most offer it but some are more comprehensive than others. Make sure you're covered for all eventualities, as you never know what you might get up to – I'm talking on the mountain, of course. You might go parapenting, tobogganing, bob-sleighbing and no doubt off piste. Check you're covered if you're without a guide, for example.

[www.natives.co.uk/insurance](http://www.natives.co.uk/insurance)


**Q Dear Jo,**  
I am going out of my mind with boredom in a very dull temp job waiting for my season to start. What am I doing, where is my life going? Help!

**A** Well, there are many answers to that question, but not really enough space to answer them all here. So, in the short term, focus on the word "temp". You'll only be there for a wee while longer – as this issue of Tribe goes to print it's merely moments before you'll be embracing the beginning of another season. That's the great thing about Natives – not to blow our own trumpet but we're here to help and keep you in touch with the snowsports community throughout the year. Get yourself onto our chat room on [www.natives.co.uk](http://www.natives.co.uk). Think yourself lucky, I remember one temp job I had where there was no internet, only a weird database computer thingy...then Tribe was created and we all breathed a sigh of relief.

**Q Dear Jo,**  
Festivals have totally rocked my world over the summer months and I don't want to miss out on any live music events this winter – will there be any bands in resort?

**A** Er, just a few! There's tons of live music in the Alps, including Natives' favourites Mullit, who tour across the Alps during winter. There's bound to be a band or two in your resort, plus look out for UK festivals in the Alps, like Snowbombing in Mayrhofen and Altitude in Méribel. Get all your favourite stuff onto an MP3 player before you go, but don't do what one of my guests did and ski with your pockets open and lose your iPod. He asked if we'd help him find it – yes, but in the spring when the snow's melted!

**Q Dear Jo**  
All I want for Christmas is a great stuffing – what's the best way to get some?

**A** Your best bet is Paxo. It's great stuffing, easy to make and tastes better than average. 

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No agencies please.  
[www.neilson.co.uk](http://www.neilson.co.uk)

