

# Flexi-catering is a gourmet option for hungry skiers

**W**HEN you're booking a ski chalet, you have only two options: staffed or self-catered.

Actually, no. There's a middle way. It costs less than staffed and more than self-catered, but it could be the best of the lot.

It's called 'flexi-catering' and what it means is that, instead of having a chalet boy or girl living with you, your meals are cooked for you and delivered. All you have to do is pop the food in the oven. The difference in price can be about £900.

It's the brainchild of a robust Frenchman named Raphael Cabuis and his Estonian wife Jana. Raphael spent four years working at Ireland's only two-Michelin-starred restaurant, the Patrick Guilbaud in Dublin.

Now, his company, Chalet Kitchen, delivers to 20 ski resorts throughout the French Alps.

Just book a self-catered chalet in any of those resorts, then sign up for Chalet Kitchen's sumptuous menus of two-course dinner, breakfast and afternoon cake. It's known as 'flexi-catering'. The



Picture: 4CORNERS

main upside is that you pay less — the amount you save should cover the cost of your transfers and ski hire.

Also, not having a chalet girl means you don't have to make conversation with a stranger at mealtimes. And you can choose when you eat. The food is delivered each morning. You heat it up whenever you're hungry. Et voilà!

My recommendation is: seek out one of Raphael's apartments in Les Gets itself. The resort represents another kind of middle way.

It's not as precious as many Swiss resorts. Nor is it a sprawling concrete theme park like some of the bigger French places.

There's plenty of skiing for people of all standards. I was

there with my father and stepmother, both tentative piste-artists. They loved it.

They loved Raphael's food, too. And we all agreed that his 'flexi-catering' initiative is one of the best-kept secrets in the Alps.

**THOMAS W. HODGKINSON**

## TRAVEL FACTS

CHALET Kitchen ([chaletkitchen.com](http://chaletkitchen.com)) delivers to 20 French resorts, including Les Gets, from £119pp per week for daily breakfast and two-course dinner. Raphael Cabuis's chalets in Les Gets ([chalets-lesgets.com](http://chalets-lesgets.com)) cost from £306pp per week including flexi-catering. Ski hire: [delavaysports.com](http://delavaysports.com).