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Soul Seed Travel Review: 5 Star Pashmina Winter Wellness & Spa Hotel, Val Thorens

by Cheryl+ on July 9, 2017 in [Spa Hotels](#), [Travel](#), [Travel reviews](#)



The luxurious [Pashmina Spa Hotel Le Refuge](#) prides itself on being at the top of the three valleys, at an altitude of 2,350m. Val Thorens, which opened in 1971 is the highest ski resort in Europe renowned for the quality and guarantee of its snow and long season (from the 26th November to 1st May). In its infancy, Val Thorens attracted free spirits to what was viewed as the frontier of alpine development.

We stayed at the hotel in December, during their Winter Camp – an active week aimed at adventures and sportsmen offering ski touring, snowshoeing, conferences with alpinists and explorers, and thankfully for me, ski lessons and yoga classes!



Taking its inspiration from the softest, warmest, richest wool in the world results in the coziest setting and we got to spend the night in an geodesic igloo pod! It was one of those awesomely surreal experiences where you see it in the marketing photos, you imagine what it's like but the reality is even better! This is glamping under the stars at its finest.



What's even more special is that the igloo is built directly on the slopes and you can watch people speedily ski past and feel their adrenaline. It's beautifully decorated and fully equipped inside with a log burning fire, proper bathroom with heated floor, sink, shower and radiator, plenty of blankets, furry bits, cute slippers and super thick dressing gowns.



The staff come and light the fire at night after the sun has gone down and the temperature drops, I loved coming 'home' to a tray of cakes and hot tea with the (electric) candles lit. We felt like kids and it was hard to sleep from excitement as we just wanted to peek outside and gaze at the sky. There is room for a little one too if there's 3 of you as there's an alcove with a single bed up some small steps. Amazing what they have fitted into such a small space! Staying so close to nature, we awoke at sunrise to the fresh powdery snow and I was eager to get myself fitted out in the ski shop for my first ever ski lesson on the slopes in the sunshine! I had ever so slightly prepared myself with a couple of pre-trip lessons on the dry slope at Chelski which I highly recommend.

As I was a complete beginner one of the instructors from the ski school took me under his wing and gave me one to one lessons. Val Thorens was the perfect place in the perfect conditions to learn and it wasn't too busy, meaning I was less likely to head ski first into somebody! After two hours of instruction per day, by day two he got me to a point where I felt comfortable and confident enough to go off on the baby slopes with my more experienced ski friend and photographer that I was traveling with.









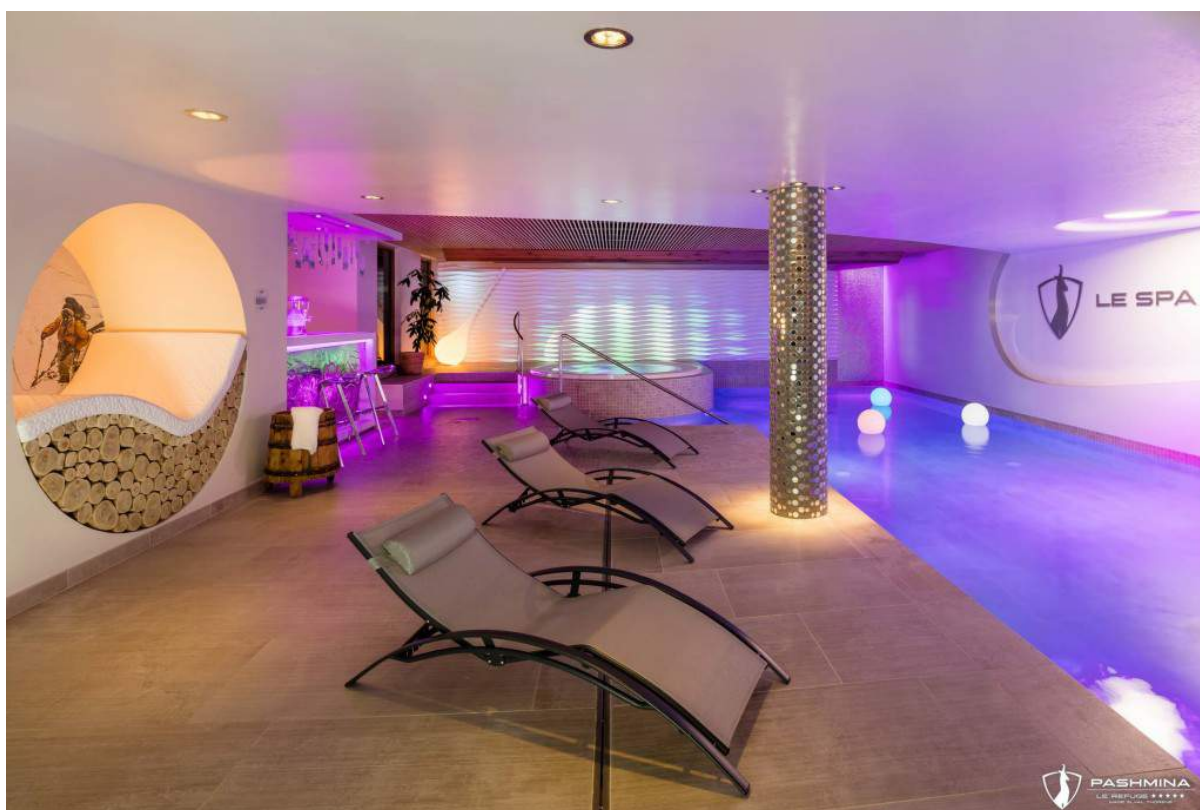
After a day of skiing, the lounge area was one of our favorite places to hang out – ultra modern, funky and colorful with a hipster vibe. Outside there's a large south facing terrace right next to the slopes, it was absolutely freezing but when the sun was shining it was a beautiful spot for an après ski glass of champagne!



The hotel has two restaurants, Le Base Camp made by the award-winning Romuald Fassenet who was awarded the Meilleur Ouvrier de France accolade (Best Craftsman in France), offering quality produce and authentic, refined dishes to be savoured in a relaxed atmosphere with the mountains as a backdrop. And the Michelin starred Les Explorateurs offering more adventurous dishes and gourmet dining. There were not many vegetarian options for lunch time however we had a really nice saffron risotto in the evening.



Breakfast was served in a buffet style offering a wide variety of hot and cold food, pastries and danishes, egg station, plenty of fruit, seeds and salad bits for vegetarian and vegans as well. The Alain Milliat juices provided a refreshing start to the day, we tried a few different flavours including beetroot, carrot and cherry.



Now I truly understand why ski + spa is just the perfect combo! There's no better feeling than stepping into a hot steam room or sauna after being on the slopes and then having a massage to ease any aches and pains in the muscles. My body was certainly grateful for it and ready for another day of skiing lessons.

The flashy and funky pink and blue 400m² Spa by L'Occitane offers a range of natural, authentic treatments and massages inspired by traditional techniques. For those brave enough to momentarily brave the ice cold temperatures there's an outdoor hot tub. It's worth it for the view which you can also get from the sauna!



Today wellness and adventure, sports and luxury go hand in hand and the Pashmina does a very good job at providing all of this under one very cozy Alpine roof.



Contact

[Hotel Pashmina](#)

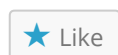
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