



The running family



Sightseeing on the run



Adrenalin rush on the water



Like staying at a friends

PERFORMANCE

THE HOLIDAY RUNNER...



After our swim in the Lake!

In this, Editor Fiona Bugler's last issue of Running Free, she revisits the theme of keeping the family fit by taking her own family for an action-packed summer holiday in the French Alps

Juggling family life and running can be a dilemma. Holidays, which at first may seem like the perfect opportunity to get your running done without the distractions of work and domesticity, can often prove to be a challenge for the runner who wants to stick to their training schedule. Running on beach holidays needs to be done in the morning or evening to avoid high temperatures, and trying to fit a run into a day where you want to entertain the kids, eat, and have some down-time can be difficult. Add to that the fact that a large proportion of fellow holidaymakers are of the mind-set that holidays mean doing nothing, and it's often easier to just get on the sun-lounger, open a book and order a cocktail!

Running talk

Not so if you choose to stay at Au Coin du Feu, a chalet-style hotel better known as Chilly Powder and run by owners

Francesca and Paul Eyre, who live in a house next door with their three children. As we sat down to our communal dinner on our first night, exhausted from our 3am start, it was clear we were in good running company, and any "relax, we're on holiday" excuses not to run were dismissed as we eagerly talked running with the guests. Personal bests and current running ambitions had been declared and registered by the finish of our first dish, and by the time we'd eaten fresh salmon from the local lake and had consumed two generous glasses of the specially selected fine wines produced by French vintner Paul Boyer, we were planning the Au Coin du Feu Challenge (see page 20).

Morzine is a ski resort in the winter and a mountain biker's mecca in the summer. It's also a popular resort for runners and active families. The perfect place for my family: I run marathons, my husband Mike is a runner and personal

trainer, and my two children, Frankie, 14, and Ciara, 10, are active members of our local triathlon club, Bodyworks.

The "Good Life"

Chilly Powder is tailor-made for families, and as soon as we walked in the door we felt as if we were guests at someone's home. English-born Francesca and Paul met in Morzine, married there, and have been living in the mountains for almost as long as they lived in England. They're fresh-faced 40-somethings oozing charm and energy – an evolved Tom and Barbara from the 70s comedy *The Good Life*. They've got the home-grown vegetables, and chickens running loose in the garden (complete with hot tub and rolling fields) but the 21st century *Good Life* comes with a property portfolio worth millions, a thriving ski business and cutting edge marketing.

Our first night finished with coffee and a discussion about barefoot shoes, and

after a long sleep we spent our first day at Lake Montirond. Still tired from travelling we swapped our planned 15-miles for nine and instead opted for a swim in the icy cold but refreshing water.

As my children are a little older than some of the others staying at the hotel, babysitting isn't an issue, but for many of the families the crèche with fully qualified nannies was invaluable.

Breakfast, afternoon tea and dinner are included in the cost. The children quickly made friends, and had 'sleepovers' in the giant garden teepee (one of Francesca's imaginative investments).

Active days out

Once settled we quickly got into a routine. At night the gathered families would swap stories about runs they'd done, walks they'd been on and activities they'd taken part in. In our week we ran most days and fitted in an adventure every day!

On our first day out, Mike and Frankie were taken on a zipwire trip through the mountains on the *Fantasticable*, which is to be found at the top of the Chaux Fleurie lift. It covers over 3k in two stages and reaches speeds of up to 100km/h. Lying in a harness, superman style, and attached to a wire you fly face first – Ciara and I watched in terror as they were cast off, flying out of sight with the words "Bon voyage" ringing in their ears.

Another day, we went white water rafting and dived off rocks into the fresh and cold rushing water. We were flung out of the boat and came perilously close to rocks, but I felt reassured by the skilful dingy directors; it was thrilling, but definitely not dangerous.

Don't be scared of heights!

We visited a charming mountain village where goats roamed freely and we were transported midair up to 1,800m on

shaky chairlifts. My kids are experienced chair-lifters as they ski every winter with their father, but I had visions of sliding through the seat and hanging on by a finger with a 300ft drop below!

My fear of heights was exposed even more when we visited Nyon to try out the high ropes. The children seemed to have no fear, whereas I had a meltdown and shakily climbed down the ladder of a 50ft tree and took position on the ground – as photographer.

Mountain bikes and multi-pass

Our next excursion was mountain biking. Coming to Morzine and not mountain biking is like going to Eastbourne and not having fish and chips! The area is packed with mountain bikers dressed head to toe in padding, with the chairlifts and gondolas that carry skis in the winter transporting bikes in the summer.

Morzine is a beautiful town, with a mixture of ex-pats and laid back French – it's cool but retains its small village culture. A recent innovation has been the off-season multi-pass, which allows families free chairlift and gondola rides, and reductions on many local attractions, including the luge (dry tobogganing), ice skating, tennis courts and a family friendly outdoor swimming pool.

And of course being France, the food is exquisite – all in all the perfect break for active families!



Chalet in the summer



The lovely oak dining table!

PRICES AND ACCOMMODATION CHOICES

Chilly Powder is open all year with prices dependent on the season. For seven nights half board accommodation in Hotel Au Coin Du Feu, expect to pay from €1595. This is based on two adults and two children sharing a standard family room. Chalet Le Plan des Rochers is a self-catered option for 14 people and costs just €1500 euros per week in summer. For winter prices, visit www.chillypowder.com or for more info call 020 7289 6958.



OUR RUNNING WEEK IN MORZINE

Fiona and Mike are experienced running coaches, and always make sure that their holiday runs have a purpose...

PERFORMANCE

“Francesca went out of her way to help us find the best runs, driving us along her favourite routes. We agreed that Chilly Powder would be the perfect venue for our Running Inn courses in 2012 (visit www.therunninginn.com to book your place). At 1,000m Morzine doesn't quite qualify as training at altitude (usually considered to be above 1,500m), but if you do want altitude, Avoriaz is just a chairlift ride away. As it is, the clear mountain air and challenging climbs offer an optimum fitness boost.”
Here's our key holiday runs (plus their purpose) for you to try in training:



Tempo & hills combo

“Our first run was on the road to Avoriaz which, the next through mountainous trails. We hit 1,500m, and definitely felt the benefits of working on the hills and running in the clear air.”

■ **WHAT WE DID:** A threshold (or tempo) hilly run of nine miles and a 16 miles long run.

■ **BENEFITS:** Working at comfortably hard pace for two 25 minute blocks continuously uphill boosts lactate threshold, which means you can run faster for longer. The hills strengthen the legs, as well as giving the glutes a great workout, and boost overall strength, creating more muscle. Long runs on this terrain build strength as well as a strong aerobic base for marathons.

Parkour running

“Parkour is a French tradition and is a fantastic idea that has reached parks in the UK. A series of stations are dotted

around Les Dérêches park behind the town's outdoor swimming pool. If you have young kids, it's a great place for one of you to run whilst the other takes the kids horseriding, swimming, or on the climbing high ropes at Indiana Parc.

■ **WHAT WE DID:** A circuit run mixing resistance and CV work: 20 x dips; 5 x chin ups; 2 x 1 minute planks; 20 x bunny hops; 5 circuits of the monkey bars; 20 jumps up onto the bar; 20 x incline and decline press ups and 20 x tricep dips.

■ **THE BENEFITS:** This type of workout is easy to do anywhere. It burns fat and builds lean muscle mass and plyometric moves like jumps and bunny hops help you spring off the ground as you run. When you work at a high intensity doing resistance work you carry on burning fat 48 hours after the workout. We also ran 6 x 20 second bursts to sharpen up the legs and help with leg turnover.

Fartlek (round the lake)

“Lake Montirond was an almost perfect two-mile fartlek loop, again recommended to us by Francesca.”

■ **WHAT WE DID:** 10 x 1 minute bursts with 1 minute jog recovery, plus warm up and cool down, six miles in total.

■ **BENEFITS:** Fartlek running on uneven trails is great for strength and for helping you to run faster. The short bursts won't take too much out of you, and being continuous means it's great for anyone (like me!) training for a marathon.”



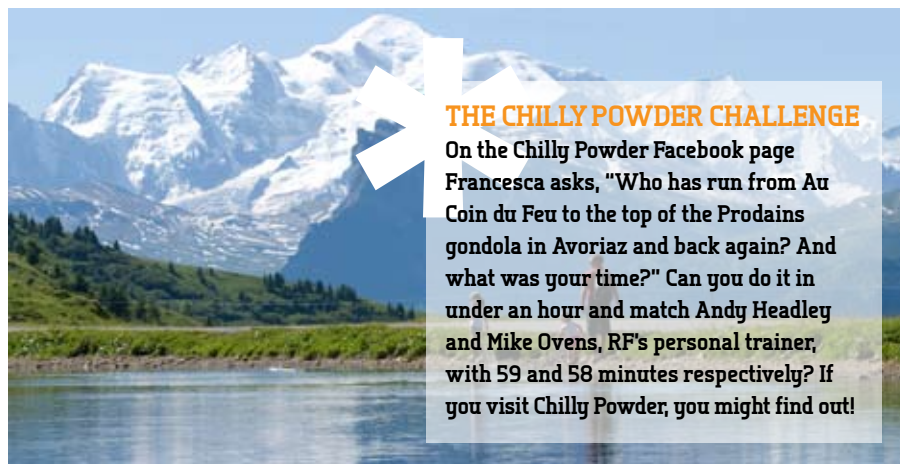
Summer races in Morzine

August 13th Trail des Hauts Forts 2011

Courses run through dense woodland, over Alpine pastures, along winding tracks and down technical descents. The marathon course has a total ascent of 3,200m. The event is a qualifier for the Ultra Trail du Mont Blanc. <http://marathons.ahotu.com/race/trail-des-hauts-forts-42-km>, email info@avoriaz.com for more information and to register for next year.

21st August La Courratt de Nyon

Try one of these two killer mountain races, one 5k, one 7k. www.lacourrattdenyon.fr



THE CHILLY POWDER CHALLENGE

On the Chilly Powder Facebook page Francesca asks, “Who has run from Au Coin du Feu to the top of the Prodains gondola in Avoriaz and back again? And what was your time?” Can you do it in under an hour and match Andy Headley and Mike Ovens, RF's personal trainer, with 59 and 58 minutes respectively? If you visit Chilly Powder, you might find out!

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