

# VENUES AND MEDALS, A BRIEF GUIDE



*Mountain Games.*

The XVI Olympic Winter Games will be taking place from 8th to 23rd February. As the Albertville/Savoy 92 COJO co-presidents, Messrs Michel Barnier and Jean-Claude Killy, originally promised, these will be “mountain Games”, where the overriding concern has been technical quality. For the first time in the history of the Games, the events, accommodation and media centres will be spread over thirteen venues in an area covering some 1600 km<sup>2</sup>. During these sixteen days, nearly two thousand athletes will be pushing themselves to the limit in an endeavour to win one of the 330 Olympic medals.

**L**ocated at the foot of its valley, **Albertville**, which presented the bid, is naturally the “gateway” to the Olympic region. A historic, commercial and administrative centre with almost 20,000 inhabitants, this town will host the traditional Olympic

ceremonies. These will take place in a temporary stadium, dominated by the cauldron where the flame will burn, where all the athletes will be among the 30,000 spectators. Between the opening and closing ceremonies, the figure skaters, speed-

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and short-track-skaters will be able to show their prowess, either inside the specially-built ice hall, a 10,000 m<sup>2</sup> competition rink with room for 9,000 spectators, or outside in the 10,000-seat speed-skating ring which can be used for athletics during the summer.

Figure skating:4 gold medals  
M, W, C, original, free; Dance:original, free, compulsory

Speed skating:10 gold medals:M. 500m, 1,000m, 1,500m, 5,000m, 10,000m  
W. 500m, 1,000m, 1,500m, 3,000m, 5,000m.

## Les Arcs

A ski resort for sensation-seekers where the speed skiing track has been inaugurated. Two competitions (men and women) organized as a demonstration event during the Games.

## Courchevel

Will host the IOC meetings and, more particularly, the birdmen and their impressive ski jumps whose shallow angle leaves it entirely up to the jumper to decide how he will jump. These ski jumps can also be used during the summer thanks to a special plastic and ceramic landing area in front of stands which can accommodate up to 23,000 spectators.

Courchevel will also be host to the Nordic combined skiers and hockey players who will have a training rink at their disposal. 3 gold medals:K90, K120 and team rankings  
2 gold medals:(K90-15 km) individual and team rankings (K90 - 3x10 km)

## Les Menuires Val-Thorens

The last sporting event of the Games, the special slalom, on a run in use since 1988, will be held in this 40,000-bed resort where a competition stadium has also been built.

1 gold medal : Men

## Méribel

This venue by the Chaudanne river marks both the finish of the women's Alpine skiing events at the foot of a "tough" run which

pleases the technical skiers, and the Olympic ice hockey tournament in a new 6,000-seat stadium. After the Games, this will be converted into a service and leisure area with a 1,500 seat capacity.

1 gold medal for ice hockey  
5 gold medals:Women:slalom, giant slalom, super G, downhill, combined

## La Plagne

The inhabitants of this resort have a long ice sports tradition, having always used the local roads as bob and luge runs to get from one hamlet to another, so it is natural to find the bobsleigh run (1507m) and luge run (1249m) here.

Construction of the track on the La Roche site has required considerable, very costly work. Safety has been given every consideration, which should ensure future development of these two sports after the Games.

2 gold medals:M:two-man bob and four-man bob

3 gold medals:M:single, double; W: single

## Pralognan-la-Vanoise

This village at the heart of the impressive Vanoise massif is the smallest venue of the Games, where competitions in the demonstration sport of curling will take place in a 2,000-seat stadium.

Two competitions (men and women)

## Les Saisies

The home of cross-country skiing and biathlon, this resort enjoys superb snow conditions. Its facilities have been built without damage to the environment. For the first time, thanks to two stands accommodating up to 12,500 people, spectators will be able to watch skiers as they pass on each lap. The 700 athletes will stay in a special village nearby.

Cross country skiing:10 gold medals :  
Men:10 km, 30 km, 50 km, 4x10 km;Women:5 km, 10 km, 15 km, 30 km, 4x5 km.

Biathlon:6 medals : Men:10 km, 20 km, 4x7. 5 km;Women:

7. 5 km, 15 km, 3x7. 5 km.

### Tignes

The trick skiers' paradise, where the freestyle skiers will be competing in three new stadiums created at Lognan-Val Claret.

6 gold medals:M: aeriels, moguls, ballet; W:aeriels, moguls, ballet.

### Val d'Isère

All the men's downhill events along with the giant slalom and super G will be here. The already famous Belvedere run laid out by the two champions Jean-Claude Killy and Switzerland's Bernhard Russi is one of the most technical runs in the world. It needs maximum snow cover as it faces due south, offering excellent views for spectators. 4 gold medals:giant slalom, super G, downhill, combined.

## TITLES TO REMEMBER

Performances engraved in crystal: the Olympic medals, created by Lalique, are unprecedented. The better to perpetuate the purity of the sporting gesture.

**W**hat are your Olympic medals like? Could you describe them?"

"Well, they're medals..." In bronze, silver or gold, the metal brighter according to placing and merit. The answer seemed obvious to the athletes who were asked this question. These medals, impossible to describe, are full of moments of intense emotion: the flag hoisted above the podium, the national anthem that can still be heard, the excitement, the applause... the joy! As though it was only yesterday. Unforgettable. Grenoble, Sapporo, Lake

Placid, Sarajevo, Calgary... All those medals are somewhere, proudly on display or carefully preserved in their symbolic casket of seconds, points or final scores. In Albertville too, they will be as immutable as time. But as transparent as crystal. Never before seen at the Olympic Games. True works of art, they will be the perfect representation of the mountain rock they might have been extracted from, of the crystalline venues where the XVI Olympic Winter Games will be held: "These medals blend in beautifully with our visual identity, our spirit, the look. we want to give the event," notes Guy Mucel, who is in charge of the Games image. The creator, Lalique, the great French glassmaker of international repute, a name which has become a prestigious label for art connoisseurs. Certain rare pieces are conserved in famous museums. Jean-Albert Corrand, COJO's Director General, tells us: "Jean-Claude Killy and I were very impressed by the nobility of this firm, undoubtedly one of the pillars of French culture. We discovered superb material and magnificent works of art... It was that immense range of creativity that gave rise to our idea of crystal medals." The project, presented to the President of the IOC, Juan Antonio Samaranch, was approved.

Set in gold, silver or bronze, a great technical innovation on crystal, they will be entirely produced by hand. Each piece has been finely wrought: on colourless crystal, the artist has engraved the back of the medal with a decorative motif symbolizing a mountain in bold lines. Five Olympic rings appear in the foreground, standing out from the valley worked in a graded satin effect. On the top side of the medal, a stylized laurel branch, on the other, the words "XVI Olympic Games" (in English and French) both engraved in intaglio. A metal ring holds a large silvery ribbon with the five Olympic colours in its centre. The medals will be awarded to 330 exceptional athletes. "Each piece is unique. One thing is for sure, they will remember these medals!", smiles Guy Mucel.

C.B.

