

## Out of the Ashes: The OF finding a ski-holiday silver lining between Brexit and Covid

**“Have you ever gone through something so mentally and physically tough that you didn’t know how you could possibly recover? Only to find that weeks, months or years later, you can look back on how far you’ve come and feel a sense of pride from the positives that came out of the ordeal?”**

Coined by psychologist Shilagh Mirgain, Ph. D., Phoenix Phenomenon is a process that ‘refers to the benefits and personal transformation that comes from working through a crisis or challenging time.’ And that’s exactly what happened when Peak Feeling Ski founders **Nikki White (V91-98)** and her friend Lauren Spring decided to change their luck.



Watching as the ‘perfect storm’ of COVID-19 and Brexit ripped through their home resort of Tignes, they saw the ski industry they had been part of for decades come to a halt. Tour ops no longer had rights; British tourists couldn’t travel due to border restrictions; bars and restaurants in the area were forced to close; and the usual atmosphere of the winter resort was reduced to a no man’s land.

The challenges facing the travel industry this year has left skiers and snowboarders demanding an increasingly more flexible approach to booking holidays, but still wanting the value and security that booking with a bonded agent offers. Enter: Peak Feeling Ski.

Lauren, who had run a hotel during the previous 5 winters for a popular tour operator, played on the idea of future proofing ski holidays for British skiers. *What if, she said, holidaymakers could use the same hassle free all-inclusive service traditionally offered by tour ops, but with a tailor-made package for each client?*

So, faced without job security, and the way of life that Nikki and Lauren were accustomed to in the mountains, Peak Feeling Ski was born ‘out of the ashes’. Offering a free service to anyone booking a ski holiday, the women use their contacts on the ground to find the best deals for every element of the traditional package holiday. As well as a large snow-sure ski area, resorts Val d’Isère and Tignes also have a wide choice of activities for non-skiers.

Nikki said: *“Our combined years of experience working in Tignes and Val d’Isère means we have extensive resort knowledge to plan customers’ trips. We will organise anything from accommodation, lift passes and ski hire ready upon arrival, a transfer to resort, ski lessons and instructors that fit guests needs, childcare for little ones, massages and spa treatments, fun activities including husky sledding, reservations in the best places to eat both on and off the slopes all the way through to a Savoyard welcome hamper”.*

Her co-founder, Lauren Spring, said: *“The UK ski holiday market’s typical formula has worked seamlessly for generations, owing to the UK being part of the European Union, with a handful of tour operators using seasonal staff to execute package deals, they would include anything and everything from flights, accommodation, transfers, childcare, ski lessons, rental equipment and more. However, with challenges to run British businesses in France post Brexit, plus Covid complications to navigate, 2021 has already seen companies struggle. Some operators went into administration, and it is expected that more will follow. Peak Feeling has turned that model on its head and re-launched a ski holiday company fit for 2021 and beyond”.*

Peak Feeling Ski travel agency has launched and they are looking forward to a promising 2021-22 winter season as pent-up demand is already driving swathes of early bookings.

With 29 years between them in the French Alps, they are local specialists of Tignes and Val d’Isère, popular resorts for British skiers and snowboarders. Insider knowledge is key for the pair, who provide bespoke deals for British holidaymakers through their extensive network of local contacts.

Peak Feeling can be contacted via [www.peakfeeling-ski.com](http://www.peakfeeling-ski.com) or calling +33 7 81 75 79 15 or [info@peakfeeling-ski.com](mailto:info@peakfeeling-ski.com)