

### **Ice climbing - Vallouise France January 19 to 26 January**

After sharpening our Quarks and Black Diamond crampons we flew to Geneva then took a hire car to Vallouise on the east side of the Ecrins. The French claim it is best centre for Ice climbing in France. We English members (Richard Toon, Bob Ashton, Joe Boyd and Roger Gott) were joined by two of our New England members (Nancy Saviklas and Richard Doucette). The apartment was comfortable and the self catering more than adequate.

The weather was pretty good and the ice was in, even though still quite early in the season. Unlike Cogne, where you leave the hotel and walk to routes (even though sometime more than an hour), it is always a drive here. One of these was several kilometres up a snow covered track. We visited Ceillac, Fournel and Freissinières. Routes included Holiday on Ice (250m - II+/3+), Easy Rider (70m - II/3), Sexy Gully (180m - II/4), Capitaine Courageux (200m - III/4).

For a change, on the last day, two of us had a ski day at nearby Puy-Saint Vincent. It was an excellent few days; at the same time we could have been walking about in the rain in Scotland.... Thanks to Mike Rosser for arranging the apartment rental. Think I will go back again next year!

