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BEAUTY

How to Ski Without Wrecking Your Skin (Or Yourself)

Whether you're an Olympian in Cortina d'Ampezzo or cruising down runs in Aspen or Zermatt, here's what your face and body needs before and after hitting the slopes

By [Fiorella Valdesolo](#) [Follow](#)

Feb. 4, 2026 11:00 pm ET





After a day spent on the mountain, take time to restore your muscles and skin. FRANCO RUBARTELLI/GETTY IMAGES

Before pro skier Sierra Quitiquit hits the slopes in Park City, Utah, where she lives, she puts on multiple layers—of skin care. First, she washes with a balm-like honey-based cleanser, then adds a generous dollop of rich moisturizer before finishing with two sunblocks: one hydrating cream and one stick for touch-ups. Quitiquit, who has been skiing since she was two, developed the routine after years of trial and error.

Cold and altitude can be a harsh combination for the complexion. “Cold air holds less moisture, which leads to dryness, tightness, and cracking as the skin loses its natural oils,” says Dr. Ellen **Marmur**, a New York-based cosmetic and dermatologic surgeon and longtime skier. UV radiation is also much stronger at high altitudes.

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“You have an increased risk of sunburn and long-term sun damage, especially since snow reflects UV rays back onto the skin,” says **Marmur**.

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Dr. Amanda Kahn, a longevity doctor and skier, on the slopes. “A full day on the mountain is a high-intensity workout layered on top of environmental strain,” she says.

DR. AMANDA KAHN

All of this impacts your skin’s barrier, making it harder to thwart irritation.

Dr. Amanda Kahn, a Manhattan-based internist and longevity specialist and avid skier, jokes that skiing can be both a gift and a challenge. “On the one hand, it’s a sport that genuinely supports longevity, cardiovascular and muscular engagement, balance and coordination, plus there are the mental health benefits of immersion in nature,” says Kahn. “But on the other hand, extreme cold and high altitude can create a perfect storm for skin stress.” And muscles too for that matter.

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Here's a guide for how to attend to your skin and body before and after a vigorous day on the mountain.





One of the best skin care products for a ski trip is a high protection factor SPF. CHRIS CRAYMER/TRUNK ARCHIVE

How to Prep

Leading up to a ski vacation, use fewer active ingredients in your skin care routine and ramp up protection. “This is the time to cocoon the skin, not activate it,” says Georgia Louise, a celebrity esthetician in New York’s Upper East Side. Louise advises pausing use of retinol, tretinoin, exfoliating acids, benzoyl peroxide and any tingling or stimulating products the week before. Instead, add in hydrating ingredients like hyaluronic acid and ceramides. Drinking plenty of water is important too, says Dr. Anetta Reszko, a New York-based dermatologist.

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AUNU Mānuka Cleanser, \$58



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Alpyn Barrier Repair Cream, \$62



Dr. Barbara Sturm Ceramide Drops Face Oil, \$160

Before hitting the slopes, slather on moisturizer then a high-protection SPF.

Quitiquit uses Good Weather Skin's The One sun cream and the Dermatone Jumbo Stick that she can apply to her lips as well as her face. A physical cover can help, too.

Marmur always ties on the Merrick scarf by Eclisse, which has UPF 50+ protection, to safeguard her neck from the sun.



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Good Weather Skin The Ski Set, \$55



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OMAD Beauty Biocellulose Restore & Repair Serum Masks, \$48



Augustinus Bader The Lip Balm, \$47

How to Repair

“After a long day on the slopes, I focus on soothing and restoring my skin,” says makeup artist and avowed ski bunny Gucci Westman. Westman starts with a gentle steam, then smooths on a layer of Augustinus Bader’s Rich Cream. “It’s deeply nourishing,” says Westman. More occlusive creams, which are designed to create a barrier and lock in moisture, “can be particularly comforting after prolonged cold exposure,” says Reszko.

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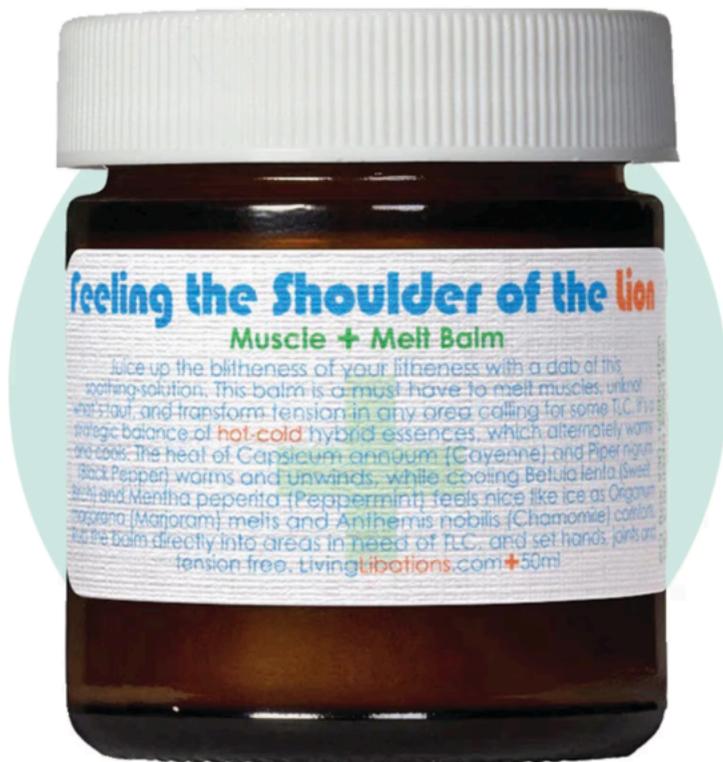
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After a day on the slopes, consider relaxing in a warm bath. GETTY IMAGES

To treat sun- or windburn on the face, **Marmur** will cocktail a bit of topical Arnica montana and aloe into her serums to help with redness and reduce any peeling. She keeps her lip routine basic, and believes that Aquaphor or Vaseline are more effective and less prone to cause irritation than fancier lip balms.



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Feeling The Shoulder of the Lion Muscle Melt Balm, \$42



Weleda Arnica Bath Soak, about \$25 on Amazon.com

How to Ease Post-Ski Soreness

The combination of cold and altitude can also take a physical toll. “Cold tightens muscles, altitude depletes oxygen, and repetitive movements strain thighs, hips and knees,” says Kahn. She relies on a Theragun or other percussive therapy for targeted muscle release and infrared sauna, which she says supports circulation and reduces inflammation.



Exposure to cold air, altitude and UV rays on the slopes can impact your skin's barrier. JAKE STANGEL

Marmur is a proponent of LED red-light recovery to reduce inflammation and speed up healing. She says her tool, the MMSphere Luxe, is popular among avid skiers,

who use it specifically on their knees.

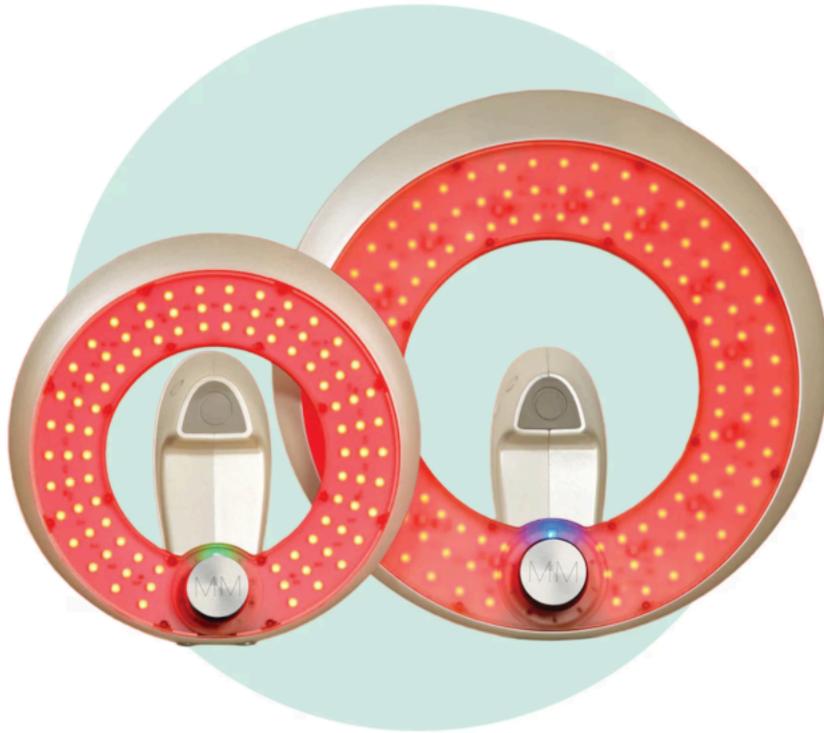
A massage also works. “Deep tissue massage within 24-hours of intense physical activity is a scientifically proven means of reducing muscle soreness,” says Reszko. At Forestis, a boutique wellness hotel in the Italian Dolomites, spa manager Eleonora Pellizzari has guests bookend their skiing with a muscle-focused massage that uses warm compresses and a signature mountain-pine body oil to gradually release tension.



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Therabody Theragun Relief, \$160



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MMSkincare MMSphere 2Go, \$395 and MMSphere Luxe, \$795



Gnarly Hydrate Salted Margarita Electrolyte Drink Mix, \$24

One of the great benefits of saunas is the increased blood flow and circulation, says Travis Talmadge, co-founder of New York's Bathhouse. "This can really help reduce soreness and stiffness from skiing," he adds. If you can't get to a sauna, Talmadge says to draw a hot bath with plenty of magnesium. Then rub a camphor or menthol balm on any sore spots, hydrate and rest. "From a longevity perspective, the goal isn't just performance," says Kahn, "It's recovering intelligently so you can keep skiing strong for decades."

Fiorella Valdesolo is a writer and editor with over two decades of experience working in media. She has held staff positions at Nylon, Teen Vogue and New York Magazine and is currently a contributing editor at The Wall Street Journal Magazine. Additionally she writes for Town & Country, Vogue, CR...

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