



AS IT IS

Europeans Feel the Summer Heat, While Some Africans Go Skiing

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While millions across Europe live through a summer of record-breaking heat, others are **skiing** down snowy mountains in Africa.

This is not another sign of climate change. Rather, it is a result of the special climate of Lesotho. Lesotho is a small mountainous nation surrounded by South Africa. It is the only country on Earth where its whole land surface sits more than 1,000 meters above sea level.

That gives Lesotho snow during the southern **hemisphere's** winters. Cold winters are not rare in southern Africa. But snow is rare.

And ski **resorts** are even rarer. At a height of 3,000 meters above sea level, Afriski is Africa's only ski resort south of the equator. It is in Lesotho's Maluti Mountains.

"I've never seen snow in my life," said Kafi Mojapelo. She traveled the short distance from South Africa for a skiing vacation she never thought she would take.

"This is a great experience," she added.

Bafana Nadida is from Johannesburg. He was happy to put on ski boots for the first time. He planned a day full of ski lessons, taking pictures and playing in the snow.

Skiers and snowboarders waited to **rent** the correct equipment. Some people took lessons from Hope Ramokotjo. He is from Lesotho and has worked as a self-taught ski and snowboard instructor for 12 years.

"Push your heels out. Don't pull your shoulders," he said to his class.

Afriski's Kapoko Snow Park is the only freestyle snow **park** on the continent. Freestyle skiing and snowboarding involves tricks like jumps, twists and flips.

Last month, competitors entered the Winter Whip Slopestyle snowboard and ski competition. Sekholo Ramonotsi is a 13-year-old from the Lesotho city of Butha-Buthe. He practices at Afriski. He has won the junior snowboard and ski divisions.

“I would really like to ski in Europe,” he said.

British-born Meka Lebohang Ejindu said he has taught skiing and snowboarding in Austria for more than 10 years. This was his first time competing in the southern hemisphere.

Afriski may not be at the level of Europe's large resorts. But a love of winter sports is growing there.

“For a competition like this to happen in southern Africa is so **heartwarming**,” Ejindu said.

I'm Dan Novak.

Dan Novak adapted this story for VOA Learning English based on reporting by The Associated Press.

Words in This Story

skiing — *n.* the activity or sport of gliding on skis

hemisphere — *n.* a half of the Earth

resort — *n.* a place where people go for vacations

rent — *n.* money that you pay in return for being able to use property and especially to live in an apartment, house, etc., that belongs to someone else

park — *n.* a field or stadium where a sport is played

heartwarming — *adj.* causing pleasant feelings of happiness

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