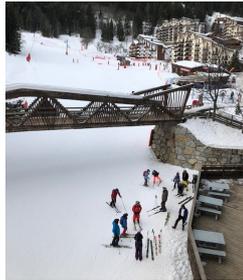




Newsletter February 2020

OPENING TIMES as usual except the following	
Easter – Sat 11 April, Sun 12th and Mon 13th April	CLOSED
Last Saturday afternoon open - 4th April	
VE Day Holiday - Friday 8th Sunday 10th May	CLOSED
Spring Bank Holiday Sun 24th and Monday 2nd May	CLOSED



2020 Club Holiday

In the week of 19th to 26th January 2019, 78 club members and friends had an excellent (2nd time) holiday at the Hotel Montana La Tania France.

Here's what one family had to say about it.

Family skiing with Kidsgrove Ski Club — La Tania 2020

As a family of four, we have been fortunate enough to join the ski club on their annual ski trip to La Tania. After last year's success to the picturesque Sestriere, we were confident that the team with a wealth of experience would seek out the best possible location and facilitates to cater for all the people in the group.

The build-up to the trip was immense with ongoing conversations, planning and studying the map of *Les Trois vallees*. Upon arrival, the transfer to the resort went smooth, room allocations and checked in process was unproblematic. We never once felt that we are part of a large group, as they all catered for us individually! And what a grand job they have done!

The amenities that Hotel Montana had to offer were satisfactory in every way. The large lobby area became a social ground for evening conversations. People shared their stories over a drink with top tips, and the children got together to play. Everyone was so friendly and eager to share their knowledge so people can make the best experience of the resort.



I loved how little groups were formed in the morning to set off for a day of adventure in the stunning Alps. There were ample slopes to provide skiing for all ability. We had some great people joined our group who were simply amazing and made sure that no one was left behind with added safety to the group. We usually skied until dusk but could have carried on longer!



Skiing with these fantastic bunch of people doesn't just mean you get to go places at a massively discounted price, but it also means friendships, community and memories cherished forever.

And here's Jacob's club holiday diary.

After an early start we made our way to pick up Grandad and then Mark and got on the Motorway to Manchester airport. The weather was really foggy so dad had to drive really slowly as we couldn't see very far in front of us. We arrived safely and checked our bags in. The flight went smooth (Grandad fell asleep) and we arrived in France to nice blue skies. After a couple of hours we were at the hotel and checked into our room, which was nice and big with comfy beds. After tea we had an early night ready for our first day of skiing.

Day 1. We went out with Grandad and did a few blue runs but soon got onto the reds and made Grandad and dad try and keep up with me. After some lunch we did a few more runs before Grandad was worn out and we headed back to the hotel.



Day 2. We met up with Luke who is working in the resort and he showed us some cool runs and the snow park as well as an awesome burger bar for lunch.



After a telling off from dad for going too fast with Luke and leaving dad at the top of the slope (it's not my fault he's so slow) we did a few more runs then headed back to the hot tub to give the legs a rest.

Day 3. Dad and me headed over to Val Thorens for the day. It was a bit of a trek but worth it for the views. After some food we made our way back and lost track of time and we missed the last lift and had to ski down to get the bus back up to the resort. We were packed in like sardines on the bus but made it back just in time for some cake.

Day 4. The weather was not so good with a bit of snow and bad light so we headed out with Adam and his crew and decided to do a few black runs. Dad was not happy when he was sliding down a black mogul run on his back. I had a little fall as well but I was trying to do 180s on the moguls! On the way home we tried to do a jump off a big rock but I face planted and did an awesome crash.

Day 5. We went to the snow park all day and dad filmed me doing some tricks and jumps, one was used on Ski Sunday which was really cool.

Day 6. We allowed Grandad to hang around with us on the last day and went to see dad's friend Kate who has a bar in



Courchevel 1650 for lunch, another ace burger then we had a go on the sledge run which was awesome even though I couldn't use the brakes properly and nearly went through the netting a few times. A few more nice runs to finish the week off then it was back to the hotel for the last night.

Day 7. Another early start and on the coach to the airport for our flight to Manchester. Dad drove back home without the fog slowing us down and we had a Sunday dinner then chilled out on the sofa for the rest of the day. Its back to school tomorrow (boooooo) and back to training at the ski club to get ready for next year.

Jacob Welsh. (Age 9)





We are delighted to announce that once again North Staffs Ski Club has achieved **Snowmark Accreditation**. Having met high quality standards in

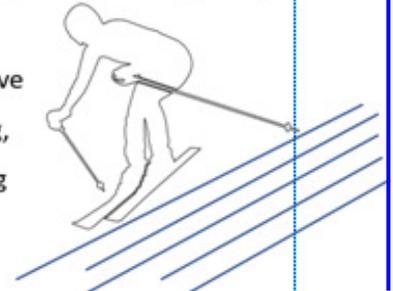
- ✓ Snowsports programme and events
- ✓ Duty of care and child protection
- ✓ Sport equity and ethics
- ✓ Club management.

AVALANCHE AWARENESS



There is no written guide that can alert you to every hazard or anticipate your personal blind spots. There is no limit of information or experience but, by gaining some basic knowledge of the different types of avalanches and becoming aware of the common pitfalls (or 'heuristic traps'). In my view these are crucial steps to becoming an alert and safer skier or snowboarder. It is important for a skier or snowboarder to know the basic steps to avalanche safety (even if they are not an "off pister" or an "explorer!"). Remember anything could go wrong at any time on or off piste and this is coming from a 12 year old.

During the course there was a range of informative and interesting 'practicals' such as tracker locating, avalanche probe testing and as you can see airbag inflating! These are just a few of the many topics we covered in the session.



One of the ways Chris Watts carried out a "practical" was by hiding trackers and for me having to locate the trackers current position. Another "practical" he implemented was avalanche probe testing. You conduct this by placing your probe in the ground and moving it in a square like motion around the transmitter signal. This helps the person locate another person who is heavily buried underneath the dense snow. This can also be useful for measuring the depth of the snow. Besides the tracking and probe testing, Chris had a formal and informative slide show on how the snow is compacted and formed. This covered some of the key features of how an avalanche is triggered.

"I would definitely recommend this course for new & old skiers or snowboarders, because as I said, you can never have enough information to be an "expert" on the mountains. I never felt embarrassed or silly when I asked my questions, which is probably why I would give this course an excellent rating.

And yes there were a lot of questions!"

By: Matthew J Whitehouse



DID YOU KNOW?

- Avalanches are most likely to occur on terrain of 30° upwards, which is prime avalanche terrain.
- Hollow drum like sounds from underneath the snow is a sign of a potential avalanche as there is nothing underneath the snow pack.
- A terrain trap is anything that increases the consequences of being caught in a slide.
- If you are caught in a avalanche, immediately take your poles off to increase the flexibility in your arms as you move them around.

Hi ... I know it is nearly the end of season, but may be something to highlight to any members who ski off piste. Also, it may be even more important next season when EHC card scheme will probably not be in existence.

I came across this comment on the Snowheads forum when looking for the Austrian equivalent of Carte Niegé.

Conversation was about action with/without Carte Niegé following an incident. Several people taking part had Insurance through their bank;

""Bear in mind **Kes**, the answer I got from my insurer (Saga) whose off-piste cover is also limited to skiing with a guide: if I covered rescue from an off-piste accident without a guide under other insurance like carré neige, Saga would not cover any subsequent costs. So I couldn 't claim recovery from the one and medical costs from Saga for example (the CN medical cover being rather limited). So if the Post Office held to the same view as Saga, and you had an accident off-piste without a guide or instructor this lift pass insurance would be all the cover you had.""



What goes on in the background?

I thought it might be useful to explain a bit of what goes on in the background to make the Club and Ski Kidsgrove a success. Much of this I stated at the last AGM but, as few people attend, here it is for a wider audience.

Since October 1993, the club has been operated on a 100% voluntary basis: no one is paid for any work done. This gives us a financial edge but equally means that we need lots of willing volunteers, each committed to doing their bit, large or small. Our prices are probably the lowest in the country but, over the years, we have saved up the annual surpluses to reinvest in the slope. After the £150k investment in 2004 (£72k from National Lottery) when we installed the Playgrass carpet, things took off and we grew in terms of lessons, memberships and number of instructors.

In 2014 we made a major investment of £500k and built the freestyle slope, installed the new tow and re-carpeted the main slope, adding the waves / rollers. This involved a first for us: borrowing some money (£150k over 10 years) from the bank and they wouldn't have lent it to us unless they were pretty sure that we'd pay it back. The good news is that in the 5 years since the new slope was finished we have paid back £50k of the £100k bank loan and the whole of the £50k lease on the tow. By the last year-end we had also built our savings to nearly £54k, so we paid back another £10k. We are financially sound and seem to be doing the right things so, if we work on a "more of the same" basis, we should manage to survive any economic downturn or other problems that may arise.

I've mentioned investment but it's not just the slope, although that's where the big numbers are. We invest in four key areas:

- **The slope:** In the last 5 years we have spent £595k on our facility. The £500k spent up to reopening with a re-carpeted main slope, new tow and magnificent freestyle slope has been steadily increased year on year with the "alpine quality" new box and rail, safety features, improved watering system, storage areas and signage.
- **Equipment:** We try to ensure that our equipment is safe and in good condition. One of the benefits of the Playgrass surface is that there is virtually no base wear so the skis virtually last for ever. That has been a big positive whilst we got the slope sorted but now is the time to sort out the skis and boots and this year we've spent nearly £9k which is immediately visible from the ski room counter.
- **Our people:** We have consistently invested many thousands of pounds over the years in the instructors – licence fees, external training courses and refreshers; plus uniforms. I know that sometimes folk have to wait but we are trying. We also invest in the possibly less visible (or perhaps taken for granted) members of the team. The boot room staff and kitchen staff have uniforms and training where relevant.

- **Our image and reputation:** This is an odd one but is a major reason for our success. A glance at the accounts shows that we spent £75 on advertising last year – it was for hosting the web site. So that isn't what's doing it: I estimate that we get well in excess of 90% of our business by some sort of "word of mouth" recommendation. The investment isn't directly financial – it is as a result of all the other investments. The quality of the slope facilities and equipment together with the skill and attitude of all our staff contribute to the score of nearly 5 for web reviews and Facebook. We have, yet again, been awarded Snowmark status that indicates a well-managed club.

This is a massive achievement by everyone involved in the club. We take it for granted that we are 100% voluntary but this is a very precious thing that has been built over the last 25 years. People give of their time in a generous way, balancing the club's needs against often difficult domestic and "normal life" commitments. Anyone who does something for the club at no cost is making the money that enables us to keep investing. Fragile things must be cared for because if they get broken it is a major issue.

A few particular thanks. As ever, Craig, who does the day to day financial work – this is not a one person job on a part time basis. It's not just Craig it's Team Timmis that includes Brenda and John who are down at the slope 4 days per week in the season and do a lot more than some people recognise. They also manage the purchasing and stocking for the kitchen as well as holding on to the level 5 food standards approval. Along with them is the rest of the kitchen team with June taking an increasing role. The boot room staff is the face of the club when someone walks through the door or rings with an enquiry. These are the people who maintain and repair the skis and boots, maintain the stock lists and purchase new equipment when required. The freestyle slope has meant that a whole new team with Diane and Gareth drives Freestyle Fridays, Jams and Futures events. This list could go on for ever because so many members do so much; for example Brian Woodcock, a members since the 1970's created the run-in at the top of the freestyle slope and the storage platform for the airbag and jumps. Norman "it takes 89 years to look this good" Salmon still comes down twice a week. If I've missed your name then sorry because there are many but space is limited.

Finally, there's the club chair, Ann Loton, who manages the vast amount of membership records, is the club's Chief Welfare Officer, produces the Newsletter, masterminds the Snowmark and looks after the admin for Junior Club; all in addition to chairing the committee and setting the strategic direction for the club.

So, whoever you are; young or old, however much you do: as volunteers you are the folk in the background who make us the success that we are.



FREESTYLE NEWS

Freestyle is continuing to prove popular at Kidsgrove. Our Freestyle Features are available at all times and are free to members. Come and try the waves, jumps and pipes....if you dare!!!

Introductory Freestyle Sessions are available:

Tuesday and Wednesday evenings 7.30pm - 8.30pm

Sunday afternoons 12.30pm - 1.30pm

(Please check availability.

£4 for Junior Members and £5 for Adult members).

Junior Club members can also enjoy a FREE coaching session on Sunday mornings 9.30am - 10.30am.

In addition we also have...

Freestyle Fridays 7pm - 9pm

On alternate Fridays the slope is dedicated to Freestyle with the addition of music and the infamous airbag. UKCP qualified coaches are also available to give support and advice.



Help needed at 7pm to ensure the airbag is ready at 7.30pm

March:	13th & 27th	May:	22nd
April:	10th & 24th	June:	5th & 19th

Juniors - Fancy a challenge?

Who is going to be the first to grab one of these?



Futures Snow Award is an award scheme aimed at young people aged 6 to 12 years old who want to keep skiing and snowboarding.

Each "step" of the Futures Snow Award is made up of 20 tricks: ten tricks that can be achieved on any mountain, indoor or dry slope and another ten that are completed "off snow".

All 20 tricks will help the mastery of balance, spinning, jumping and turning skills both on and off "snow".

Futures Step 1 Snow Award is aimed at kids who can control their speed on a short slope and can turn.

Look for details on the notice board or ask one of our Freestyle Coaches.





News from Club Member Mia Brookes

My Winter Diary 2019/2020

Hi everyone, hope you're all enjoying the winter.

This winter we were out in Livigno, Italy in our motorhome again, this is where the GB team spend a lot of time training together.

Winter started early, with a 4 day trip straight to Livigno to ride with my coaches. The snow was good and we mainly did lots of mountain riding together!

After this we drove from Livigno on to Morzine for their opening weekend. Over the summer I was invited to ride for Rome snowboards & be on their global team, & also 686 clothing invited me to be part of their European girls team. So this was a good opportunity to meet everyone, to ride with some of my new sponsors and ride with some amazing people too, including Gigi Ruf, we filmed together, that was pretty awesome!!!

From here, we went to meet my dad in Laax for Christmas and New Year. Straight from there, I went on to Livigno again to compete in the World Rookie Tour comp, so happy to take the overall win! After this I flew back home, to catch up at school and spend my 13th birthday at home.



The first week of February I went to Finland to film a street part with my dad, John Weatherly & some of the other Soap Bar guys, some of the spots were big but I managed to get some good clips for the film and this should be out over summer, should be good!!

I'm now back in Livigno with my mum, training with GB park & pipe for the half term break. Katie O is back here riding with us after her amazing WC comp results so far this season and Jamie Nichols turned up yesterday, he's fun to ride with!!

Yesterday I landed a bs9 - needs a bit more work this week but I'm so happy! I'll be finishing here next week with a quick trip to Laax for two days as I just got invited to ride at the Vans hi-standard series, I'm so excited for this!!!

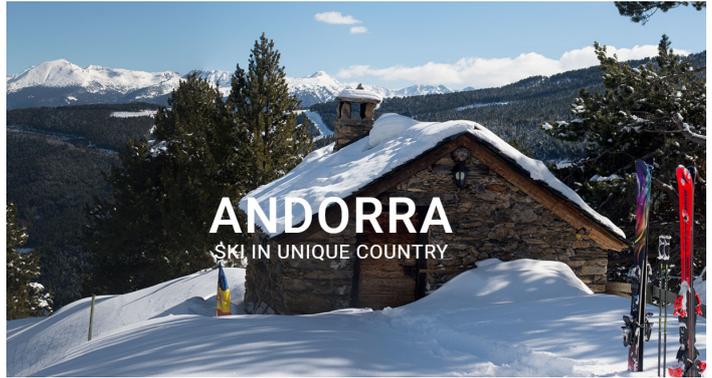


I have a few more trips & comps lined up through March and April and I will let you all know how I get on.

Have fun, Mia xxx

CLUB HOLIDAY 2021 ANDORRA

As many of you know it is becoming increasingly difficult to find new venues in the right location. Many hotels while appearing to have enough rooms do not accept groups our size so we have broadened the search this year. Before 2019 the ski resorts in Andorra operated separately but with a huge investment in new lifts and other facilities two main ski areas have been created. We have chosen Grandvalira the larger of the two, providing over 200 Km of well linked pistes to suit all abilities. Most slopes are north facing with a good natural snow record and there are extensive snow making facilities.



Although the basic cost of the holiday is slightly more than we have paid previously, with the lower prices on the lift passes and other offers from Crystal the overall amount is very comparable.

We hope you will join us on the Club's first visit to Andorra.

Skiing in Grandvalira.... 210 Km of piste Piste map looks good



The ski area is accessed by parallel chair and gondola lifts from the two bases at [Soldeu](#) and [El Tarter](#), giving at least four choices to get up to the above-treeline terrain first thing in the morning, minimising queues.

There are two large ski areas specifically designed for beginners

at Els Espiolet in Soldeu and Riba Escorada in El Tarter and more than 160 multi-lingual teachers ready to give advice. Beginners will soon progress on to the gentle slopes of Solana del Forn above the resort. Intermediates will enjoy Soldeu's skiing the most, with predominantly easy and intermediate trails to enjoy.

The lift link to Pas de la Casa and Grau Roig opens up 200km (125 miles) of terrain best suited to intermediates. Expert skiers have eight trails to choose from and a drag lift serving the off piste terrain of Pic d'Encampadana. Here you will find a snowcat operation, unique to the Pyrenées, bringing off-piste powder to those who want it. It may be unique to the world in that the service is offered free of charge to lift pass holders without supplement. The resort announced a huge investment in new lifts and other infrastructure improvements for the millennium season. Soldeu built three new six-seater chairs all located to service the large snowfields above the treeline directly above Soldeu and neighbouring village of El Tarter. The lifts accessed 8 newly created trails (5 blues and three reds) adding 11km (6.5 miles) of terrain. A new quad, Les Solanelles also accessed some of these new trails and creates and also improves the link over to Pas de la Casa and Grau Roig.

An eight seater gondola links a third base village, [Canillo](#), into the system, running from a base at 1500m up to 2100m where a new complex, El Forn, is being developed to include nursery school, ski school and restaurant. A quad then takes you further up to 2465m. A beginners area is also serviced by a short slow quad - North American style. The area also features a new drag lift and two new runs (blue and red). Soldeu's ski school manages heli-skiing excursions, snowcat and off-piste ski lessons if you need them and can also offer telemark and snowboarding tuition.

There are a variety of pistes to suit all levels of skier ability, from Beginner to Expert. **PTO...**

2021 Club Holiday ANDORRA Sundays 17th to 24th January
Limited number of places available

We will be staying in the centre of the area in **Soldeu** at 1800m. An 8 man gondola or a 6 man express lift take you up to Espiolets at 2250m for the ski school and nursery slopes. From here there is a good variety of long blue and red runs in both directions to access more varied slopes in the other parts of the resort. At the end of the day it is possible to ski back down a red run, or download on the gondola.



Public buses run to other parts of the ski area and to the capital, Andorra la Vella (about half an hour away), if you feel the need for some tax free retail therapy.



We will be travelling with **Crystal Ski** and staying at the **Sport Hotel**. This popular hotel is in the middle of the village and directly opposite the main gondola. Skis are stored in secure lockers at the base of the gondola (pre-allocated to your room and rental included in holiday price).

Facilities include bar, lounge, fitness room. All rooms have satellite T.V., telephone, hairdryer and safe. Spa facilities are available in the Sport Wellness Mountain Spa (additional charge).

Our half board arrangement covers all 7 nights in the Buffet restaurant for...
 Buffet breakfast.

- 3 – Course buffet evening meal salad, starter and dessert buffets and show cooking.
- Half a litre of red or white wine per room per night with your evening meal.

The costs for the Flights/Transfers/Hotel: Based on 2 sharing (no single occupancy available)

£724 per adult £599 per child (12 yrs and under on date of travel)

INCLUDING either FREE ski carriage (1 set of skis).
or FREE standard ski hire if you purchase a ski pass.

<u>6 day full Area Ski Pass</u>	<u>Upgraded ski hire</u>
Child (4-11) FREE	Intermediate £92
Youth (12-17) £217	Advanced £120
Adult (18-64) £242	
Senior (65 -69) £141	
70 yrs+ FREE	<u>Ski Boot hire</u> £41

***For Child or 70 years+ .. Ski carriage is £45 (1 set of skis)... Hire of Standard skis £66 – 10% discount applies.**
***** For any age.... Second set of skis in a bag = additional £25**

DEPOSIT –In order to secure the hotel and flights from Manchester, the Club has already paid a deposit of **£100 Per person** for **74 places**. Your deposit will therefore be paid to the Club and the balance and the cost of any extras direct to TUI in October.

The Club will again take out Group Tour Organisers Liability Insurance and we ask that a contribution **of £4 per person towards the cost of the premium be paid with your deposit.**

***** This holiday is sold under the terms and conditions of Crystal Ski (part of TUI holidays). Full details can be found on their website [.https://www.crystalski.co.uk › our-policies › terms-and-conditions*](https://www.crystalski.co.uk › our-policies › terms-and-conditions*)**

If you wish to book this holiday please complete the forms attached

North Staffs Ski Club -- 2021 Club Holiday – Booking form 1

Sunday 17th January to Sunday 23rd January 2021 – Sport Hotel – Soldeu Andora

I/We wish to book Places..... **A non-refundable deposit of £104 per person is payable to North Staffs Ski Club Ltd** (this includes a £4 contribution to our GTOA Liability Insurance)

Name..... Address

.....

.....

Your contact details – We try to send all communications about the holiday by email, please check yours regularly. (These details will be used by Club members and the Tour operator only in connection with the holiday).

Email.....

Telephone – Home..... Mobile.....

Cost of Hotel/Flight/Transfer: Based on 2 sharing **Adult £724**
(Child =12 years and under at date of travel) **Child 599**

**** Deposit payments...** Total deposit of £..... enclosed / bank payment **(Balance due in October)**

Please complete both pages of the Booking Form as far as possible; You can return it by **Email** **or** Post it to - Jo Stackhouse at 78 Allport Road, Cannock, Staffs WS11 1DY **or hand it in** at the Ski Club.

Cheques – payable to *North Staffs Ski Club Ltd*

Direct Bank payment – to *Natwest Bank - Alsager* Sort code **60 01 12**
for North Staffs Ski Club Ltd Acc no **94997969** Our Ref...Club Hol+Your surname

For All Bookings – please let me know by email when you post your booking, leave it at the slope or make a direct payment so that we can check and confirm to you that everything has arrived safely.

If you have any queries, please email Jo Stackhouse on NSSCholidays@outlook.com with your question and also provide a contact telephone number.

Please provide the **Names** and **Passport details** of everyone for whom you are making a booking;

* *Names to be as on Passport* * **Brexit – current rules on expiry are to have at least 6 months left from date of return but please check Government website later in the year.**

	Title	First Name	Surname	Date of	Passport Num-	Date	Date	Issued
1								
2								
3								
4								
5								
6								

I wish to share with.....(only complete this if you are booking on your own).

**See Booking Form 2 for ; Prices/Ordering – Ski Passes + Ski Carriage + Ski Hire.
Providing details of – Your Travel Insurance **and** Any Special Diets/Allergies

Booking form- 2 North Staffs Ski Club 2021 Club Holiday --Sunday 17th January to Sunday 24th January 2021 – Sport Hotel in Soldeu

Booking made by: _____ Email: _____ Telephone: _____

Special Diet or Allergies, other information

Name	Details of diet/allergy	Other information

Insurance details – ** Check that your policy has adequate Winter Sports cover for the activities & types of skiing/boarding that you wish to take part in. Brexit... see Government website for arrangements for services similar to currently provided by your EHIC card.

Name	Insurance Provider	Policy Number -- if relevant	Insurers emergency medical contact number
1.			
2.			
3.			
4.			
5.			
6.			

Ski Passes (6 day full area) -- Ski Carriage -- Equipment Hire Senior/ Adult/Youth -Purchasing Ski Pass Child (4-11 yrs) or 70+ years – Free Ski Pass

Name	Area pass + Carriage - 1 set skis	Area Pass + Carriage – 2 sets skis	Area Pass Only	Hire of Standard Skis	Upgrade to Intermediate Skis	Upgrade to Advanced Skis	Ski Boots All ages	Ski Carriage 1 set skis	Ski Carriage 2 sets in 1 bag	Area Pass Only	Hire of Standard Skis	Hire of Intermediate Skis	Hire of Advanced Skis
	£141 Snr £242 Adult £217 Youth	Double Bag £165 Snr £267 Adult £242 Youth	£141 Snr £242 Adult £217 Youth	FREE	£92	£120	£41	£45	£70	FREE	£66	£92	£120
1.													
2.													
3.													
4.													
5.													
6.													

For Upgraded Hire or where Carriage/Hire is charged as no Ski Pass is purchased.....There will be a 10% discount applied to those items on your final Invoice