

THE WORLD'S BEST

SKI & DESIGN



HOTELS

CORYNNE W. PLESS

Lannoo





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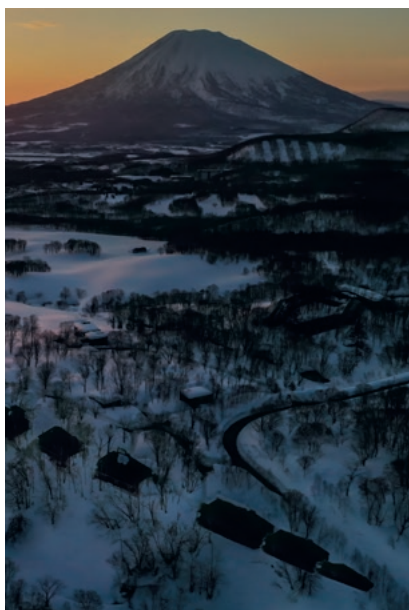
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INTRODUCTION

OVER THE PAST several centuries, skiing has evolved from a method of transportation to a coveted recreational pastime and premier world sport, sowing a distinctive culture along the way. Today's ski communities are deeply enriched by their own vernacular and fashion, and a day on the mountain is traditionally enjoyed together – with the post-ski celebrations (aptly coined “après-ski”) often as valuable as the snow and slopes themselves. Naturally the mountain's resorts, valleys, and hillsides have transformed over the decades to accommodate this influx of adventurers and holidayers. Today, thousands of hideaways are designed specifically to elevate the slope-side experience. In *The World's Best Ski & Design Hotels*, we've highlighted 26 retreats built for skiers and mountain enthusiasts who appreciate great architecture, thoughtful interiors, world-class skiing, and lively après-ski spots.





To design their quintessential ski escape, several hoteliers looked to the past to shape their future. The “golden era” of skiing, which reigned between the late 1950s and early 1970s, heavily influenced the design and aesthetics of these properties. Vibrant hues, wood-clad interiors, and Nordic textiles were reimagined as an ode to this period, resulting in a warm dialogue between then and now. And in an effort to cultivate mid-century’s notoriously decadent après-ski scene, hotels implemented more imaginative methods of refueling and relaxation after a long day on the slopes. One hotel in Courchevel built a pared-back restaurant enveloped by the forested mountains. With multiple fireplaces and a chic, cave-like interior, the quaint social hub offers a selection of delectable dishes unique to the region and the hotel. Another hotel in Megève designed a fantastic piano bar, with thick velvet curtains theatrically framing a wooden bar – resulting in a colorful, bespoke lounge, reimagining history in all the right ways.

Protecting the mountain’s landscape and prospective climate is another recurring theme that heavily influences the design and programming for the majority of these properties. One aspiring hotelier from Italy discovered a derelict sanatorium and spent years mindfully transforming it into a luxurious getaway. When the time came to expand the property, the hotel consulted with local heritage advisors and arborists and was encouraged to build vertically so the hotel’s expansion wouldn’t encroach on the surrounding flora and fauna, yet still provide impeccable views of the distant Dolomites. Several hotels also curbed their carbon footprint by sourcing materials locally and adding energy-efficient systems to the hotel’s program. They also prioritized working with local craftspeople and manufacturers, in an effort to further preserve the heart and soul of the land and communities for generations to come.

New and seasoned skiers have also come onto the hospitality scene to explore, reinvent, and challenge the traditional lodgings and activities that define a perfect ski holiday. For some, the proximity to the mountain and swift access to the summits is a must for any ski trip, while for others, retreating far from the resorts and crowds to a place of solitude is a sought-after luxury they can’t ski without. At a newly opened resort in Big Sky, Montana, guests don’t have to choose. The hotel’s exceptional lodgings are tucked within a secluded valley, bordered by the protected lands of the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem, and provide direct access by a private, heated gondola to a wide network of slopes in one of the largest ski areas in the United States.

Finally, numerous hotels in these pages are family-owned and operated. One Austrian couple recently handed the keys of their architectural masterpiece to their two sons. The brothers creatively filled their childhood stomping grounds with designer furnishings, original works of art, and colorful fine objects, resulting in a hip, stylish retreat overlooking a placid lake, just minutes from the slopes.

Whether you’re looking for an intimate lodge submerged in the mountains or a vibrant getaway in the heart of a village, the hotels in this book offer beautiful, design-forward escapes hemmed in by the world’s most breathtaking mountains, each pioneering and molding the new age of skiing into tomorrow. Bon voyage!



PREVIOUS LEFT — Miramonti, Italy

PREVIOUS RIGHT — Rosewood Courchevel
Le Jardin Alpin, France

OPPOSITE — Experimental Chalet
Val d’Isère, France

FOLLOWING — Le Coucou, France









AETHOS

MONTEROSA

— *Aosta Valley, Italy*

“THE MOUNTAINS DICTATED EVERYTHING,” says Lily Wecker, chief executive officer of award-winning hotel group Aethos. When the company decided to open their first Alpine getaway, the Aosta Valley in northwestern Italy checked all the boxes. Just two hours away from Milan, the spectacular mountain region is made up of glaciers, waterfalls, pine forests and towering summits, striking the perfect balance between seclusion and convenience. “Unlike many Alpine hotspots, the Aosta Valley has remained refreshingly low-key, drawing people who come for the mountains rather than the scene,” says Wecker. Inaugurated in 2023, Aethos Monterosa offers easy ski-in, ski-out access; unparalleled views of the midnight-blue mountains; and a dreamy, minimalist aesthetic that poetically echoes the essence of the landscape.





The intimate resort hosts 53 guest rooms and is settled on the edge of Champoluc, a quaint village tucked under the foot of Monte Rosa – the second-highest mountain range in Western Europe. Champoluc is situated at 1,570 meters above sea level, with old-stone buildings lining the streets and traces of French and Italian traditions ribboning through the architecture and cuisines. The resort's original architecture was conceived by Italian-based firm Bladidea, who constructed a geometric compilation of wood-clad buildings, each positioned to frame the beautiful Monte Rosa massif.

Aethos then tapped the multidisciplinary Barcelona-based firm Astet Studio (a frequent collaborator on Aethos projects), to design the interiors. The firm drew in the landscape's muted colors, soothing textures, and calming ambiance. "The palette echoes the landscape: deep greens from the forests, warm neutrals inspired by stone and larch wood, soft greys from the glaciers above," says Wecker. "But beyond aesthetics, the location shaped the rhythm of life."

The hotel's location at the foot of Monte Rosa makes it easy to venture in and out of the mountain's beckoning terrain. Monterosa Ski, the nearest ski area, connects Champoluc's Val d'Ayas with the Gressoney and Champorcher valleys in Aosta, and Valsesia in neighbouring Piedmont. There are over 100 kilometers of varied slopes winding through all four valleys. The interconnected resort is often referred to as a "freeride paradise" (especially Alagna in Valsesia) and offers an expansive snow terrain with kid-friendly parks, long runs, and high-altitude powder. "What makes it special is how tranquil and peaceful the resort is, even in the high season. It's a favorite among serious skiers who want real terrain without the chaos of larger resorts," says Wecker.

Aethos Monterosa is set up to make snow days as easy as possible. There's a dedicated ski room with equipment rentals, and the hotel can arrange for a private ski guide and heli-skiing expeditions. Guests can also explore one of the many hiking trails that wind pass the hotel's door steps, like the Sentiero per Lago Blu trail which stretches deep into the larch forest and opens to a beautiful glacial lake. Snowshoeing is a popular pastime that promises the mountain without the queues and guests can walk out of the hotel to discover endless adventures under the snow-coated pines. The hotel's 13-foot year-round indoor climbing wall, another guest favorite, is paired with an outdoor ice wall, built directly into the architecture.

When it is time to call it a day, the spa at Aethos Monterosa is hard to pass up. The soothing indoor-outdoor wellness center was designed with the skier's body in mind. Take a beat in the hot tub, relax in the sauna, or dip sore muscles in the cold plunge. Enjoy a signature massage designed to rejuvenate strained muscles or bring a book to one of the pools and relish in the peaceful viridescent pines framed in the floor-to-ceiling glass windows.

Evening libations are well provided for too, thanks to The Doping Champoluc. The moody and decadently hip bar offers a menu of herby, punchy cocktails with a special hot punch that changes weekly. The hotel has two restaurants for guests to enjoy after a day on the mountain or in the spa. At the Summit, unrivaled views of the surrounding mountains are paired with a tasty menu of alpine comfort foods. The 1568 Japanese Steak House fuses classic Italian cuisine with a hint of Japanese flair and offers classic dishes like carpaccio and rich ragú.

Whether you are seeking a full day on the slopes or a peaceful escape deep in the Alps, there's no shortage of adventure and tranquility at Aethos Monterosa.



PREVIOUS LEFT — Floor-to-ceiling glass windows frame the landscape in the hotel's spa cabin

PREVIOUS RIGHT — Steam from the heated outdoor pool rises against the snow

ABOVE (TOP) — Colorful bottles of wine flank the wall of the restaurant

ABOVE (BOTTOM) — Guests can enjoy a sunlit indoor climbing gym

OPPOSITE — Views of the Pennine Alps are framed throughout the property