

AD 100

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DISCOVERIES



DEBUT

Cozy Up

RH Ski House brings high style to high altitudes with comfortable, contemporary takes on alpine tradition

Say the words *ski house* to any adrenaline junkie and their eyes light up at the thought of runs down the slopes and hot chocolates by the fire. But mention the same to a discerning aesthete and the immediate associations prove far less thrilling—clunky log cabins, cringeworthy pelts, the yellow glow of varnished pine. . . . Luckily, the creative minds at RH have gone off-piste, debuting a new concept of alpine-inspired furnishings that rethink Tyrolean tropes and chalet staples for the 21st century. Mountain homes from Colorado to Courchevel will be all the chicer for it.

“We realized no one was presenting a clear and compelling vision and believed we could,” says RH chairman and CEO Gary Friedman of RH Ski House, which launched in November with its own dedicated sourcebook and website. The idea first came to him in Aspen, where the company is developing a new gallery and guesthouse. (The same trip also inspired him to take up skiing again after 30 years.) Wellness—a connection to the great outdoors, a spirit of calm, and above all a sense of comfort—quickly became a guiding principle. “Clearly warmth was a feeling the collection needed to communicate,” notes Friedman, who enlisted a team of designers from around the world. “We always try to get all the brains in the game.”

Take Alan Price, a North Carolina furniture maker and first-time RH collaborator. “I’ve been contemplating the Danish notion of *hygge*, which cannot be translated into a single word

1. A MOUNTAIN COMPOUND BY AD100 FIRM OLSON KUNDIG (AD, JANUARY 2015). 2. NATURAL ANTLER TABLE LAMP. 3. BERNE SOFA. 4. BRUNSWICK OAK-AND-LEATHER GAME TABLE. 5. YETI SHEEPSKIN ARMCHAIR.

1: BENJAMIN BENSCHNEIDER; PRODUCTS: COURTESY OF RH

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— Gary Friedman

but encompasses a feeling of contentment and coziness,” he explains of the genesis for two sofa collections. Whereas one features tailored channeling reminiscent of classic Chesterfields, the other accents distressed Italian leather with fluffy shearling. He traces both to a chance stop at Denver Art Museum’s Dior exhibition last year. “Visitors became caught up and transported. I left wondering how I might create furniture that allows someone to experience the warmth and coziness of mountain surroundings.”

Longtime RH collaborator Timothy Oulton, meanwhile, looked to the 1970s, upholstering bed frames, sofas, side chairs, and chaises in shaggy New Zealand sheepskin—or, as he calls the long-haired hides, Yeti. (Not even the Abominable Snowman could resist perches this plush.) “It’s luxe and glamorous yet wild, an untamed sophistication,” notes Oulton. “We wanted to create somewhere you could completely chill out, evoking that moment when you just want to collapse on the sofa after a day’s skiing.”

Brutalist architecture inspired the chiseled forms of his Kendari collection, with suar-wood surfaces deeply scored by hand. Timber appears throughout the RH Ski House repertoire. Amsterdam-based designer Theo Eichholtz fashioned reclaimed oak into clean-lined pieces, among them rustic cabinets and occasional tables, the latter with joints reminiscent of log cabins. His fellow Dutchman Luay Al-Rawi paired oak with rough concrete for a subtle mix of textures and tones.

That same tension plays out elegantly in the work of Nicholas and Harrison Condos. “Winter draws more dramatic contrasts to the senses,” the Australian brothers write via email. “We’ve tried to replicate that in our designs, referencing the juxtaposition of the freezing-cold slopes and the enveloping warmth of the lodge.” Natural and dark wood finishes deliver yin-yang balance; angular table and chair legs nod to



1. DAVOS OAK SIDE TABLE. 2. HARLOW CALCITE SCONCE. 3. DESIGNERS HARRISON (LEFT) AND NICHOLAS CONDOS AT THEIR L.A. STUDIO WITH THE DAVOS OAK DINING TABLE AND SADDLE DINING CHAIR. 4. YETI SHEEPSKIN SECTIONAL. 5. RECLAIMED RUSTIC OAK COFFEE TABLE.



mountain topography; and hand-brushed oak surfaces mimic the exposed grain of felled trees.

Of course, what would a ski house be without antlers? RH has assembled sustainably sourced (i.e., naturally shed) ones into chandeliers, floor lamps, and table lamps. All mingle nimbly with new light fixtures like Oulton’s Harlow Calcite series—which features faceted mineral specimens—and San Francisco blacksmith Jefferson Mack’s Riveted Mesh collection, with its industrial-style drum shades and forged-steel bases.

“Whether you ski or just enjoy being in the mountains or snow, RH Ski House is designed to make you feel warm, comfortable, and relaxed,” says Friedman. “If you don’t own a ski house, be careful when you sit in the Yeti chair or sofa—it just might inspire you to buy or build one. That happened to me.” rhskihouse.com —SAM COCHRAN

PORTRAIT: ADAM AMENGUAL; PRODUCTS: COURTESY OF RH