



Whether booking a room or the whole place, these ski retreats are the peak of high living

## EXPERIMENTAL CHALET, VAL D'ISÈRE

Here in Chelsea-sur-neige is a trusty formula for slope rangers who have long extolled the charms of Val d'Isère. But forget anything stuffy: interiors at this newly opened hotel channel 1960s and 1970s glamour - evoking the kind of place you'd expect to find Brigitte Bardot and Gunter Sachs in ski season. The edecticism continues in the bedrooms, which are generously sized, with huge beds as their centrepieces. And if you find yourself staying in the Bellevarde Penthouse (named for Le Face de Bellevarde, the infamous black ski run with its 959-metre descent), then the room-service raclette is a must. Downstairs, two exquisite restaurants excel in Savoyard classics that pair perfectly with an icy martini. experimental chaletval diserv.com

## CHALET HARMONY, MÉRIBEL

This glorious property, a short stroll from Méribel's pistes and charming centre, is a triumph of storybook chalet design. The interiors in all seven bedrooms are sleek and comfortable (a highlight is the enormous beds, wonderfully warmed up with hot-water bottles every night), and there's a vast master suite that takes up the entire top floor, with a 360-degree panorama of the slopes. The vibe is warm and chic, almost giving the sense that you're staying at the home of a glamorous friend who just happens to have a divine chef in residence, as well as a fabulous pool. But that is operator Purple Ski's aim - to make the whole experience exquisite, complete with a roll call of some of the hest ski instructors in town.

pserpleski.com/chalets/harmony

## SCHLOSS ELMAU, BAVARIA

A revered cultural hideaway where literary figures, painters, performers and philosophers once found solace in nature, Schloss Elmau is even more impressive up close; and its appeal is particularly heightened in the depths of winter. Here you can relish the remoteness - and epic snowscapes - from sprawling suites where tiered terraces give fantastical views of the Wetterstein mountains, Equally enjoyable are the cashmere-covered beds and the silken elegance of the chaise-longues. Try your best to extract yourself for cross-country skiing through silent, evergreen-scented woods, then curl up with a slice of poppy-seed cake in one of the elegant drawing rooms, with their elephant-adorned linens and flickering fires.

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## CHALET DES FERMES DE MARIE, MEGÈVE

It doesn't get more sublime than sitting on your own snowy terrace as cheese fondue is served while you cradle a glass of warming Château Mouton Rothschild wine and take in the cool Alpine air. This five-bedroom cuckoo clock fantasy of a chalet is Heidi-meets-Ralph Lauren - all wood panelling, roaring fireplaces, deep bathrubs and squishy sofas - and it exudes an air of sophistication and ease, thanks to hotelier and interiors maven Jocelyne Sibuet. It's managed by the illustrious Fermes de Marie hotel, whose restaurant you can visit on a whim, fine-dining on ribeye and creamy gratin de crozets. Need to recalibrate? The on-hand spa therapists will resurrect your glow with Pure Altitude facials.

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